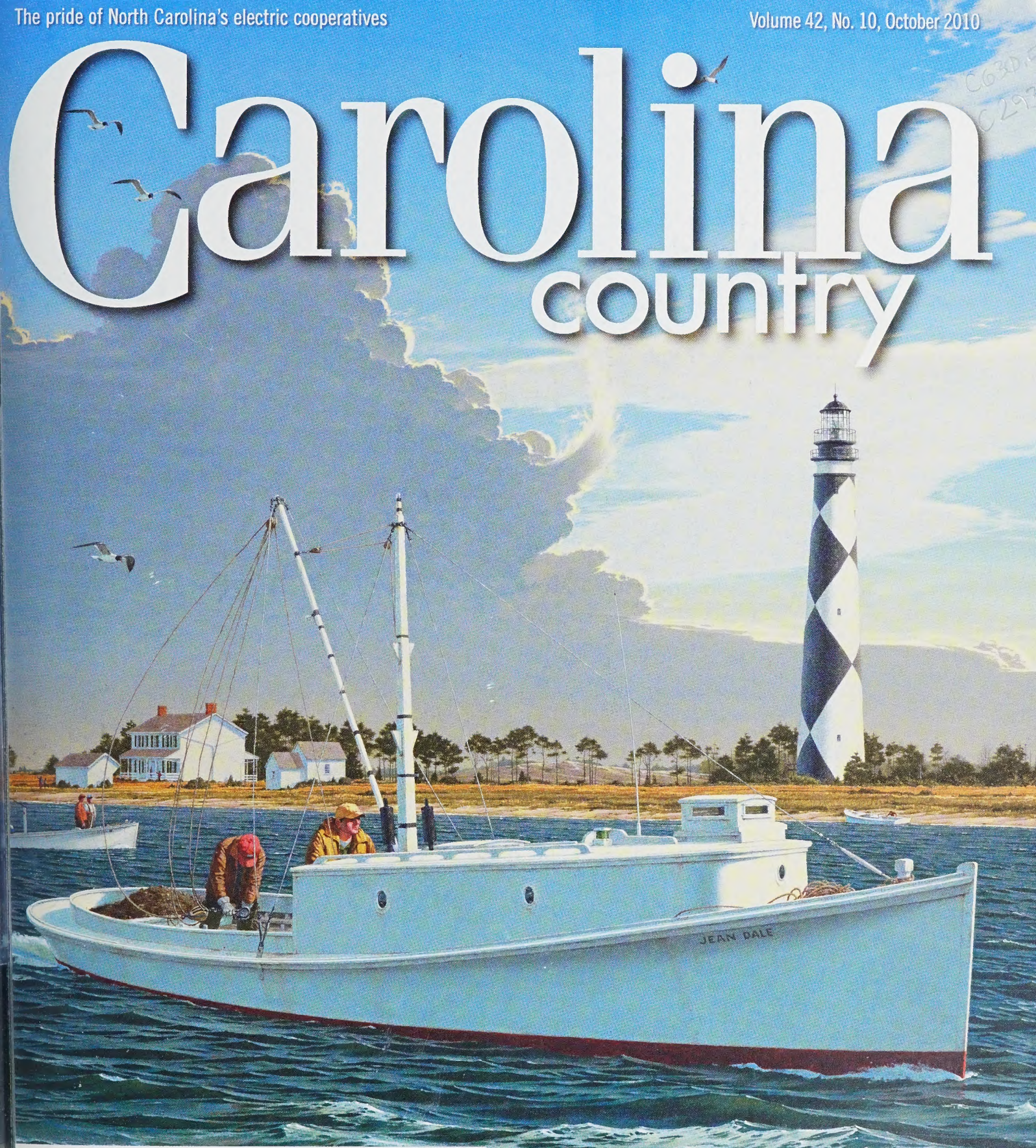
The pride of North Carolina's electric cooperatives

Volume 42, No. 10, October 2010

Carolina country



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Wind energy facts

Why we trim trees

Growing hops

Teresa Pennington's Blue Ridge Parkway Art—page 20

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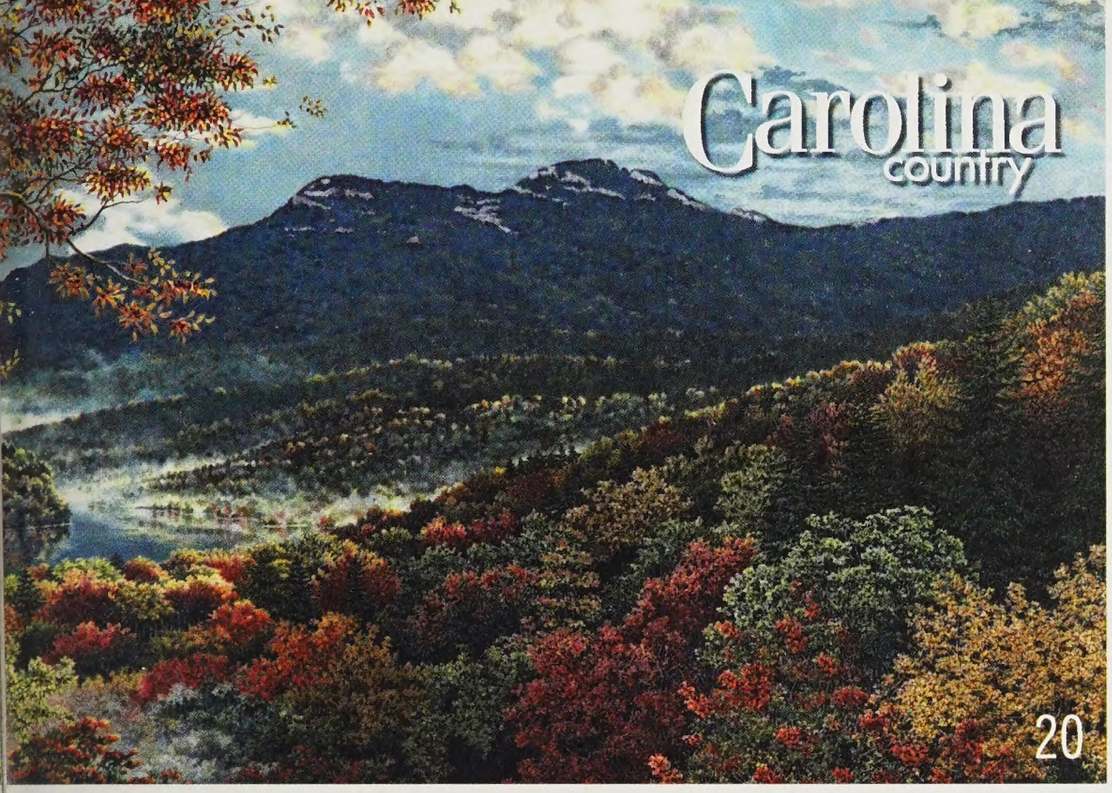

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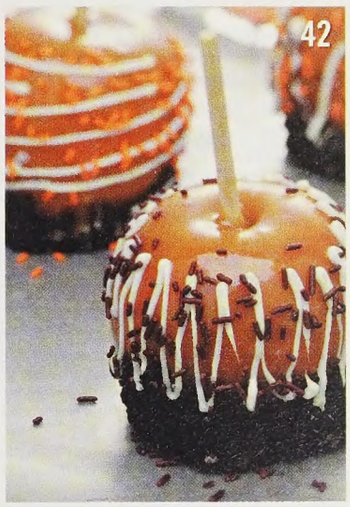
"Cape Lookout Classics," art by R.B. Dance, shows the "Jean Dale" heading out at Cape Lookout. Prints accompany the current Harkers Island Boatbuilding exhibit at Core Sound Waterfowl Museum & Heritage Center (see page 36). The "Jean Dale" boat itself is there. Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative is a sponsor of the museum. For prints, call (252) 728-1500 or visit www.coresound.com



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Editor
Michael E.C. Gery, (919) 875-3062
Senior Associate Editor
Renee C. Gannon, CCC, (919) 875-3209
Contributing Editor
Karen Olson House, (919) 875-3036

Creative Director
Tara Verna, (919) 875-3134
Senior Graphic Designer
Warren Kessler, (919) 875-3090
Graphic Designer
Linda Van de Zande, (919) 875-3110

Publication Business Specialist
Jenny Lloyd, (919) 875-3091
Advertising
Jennifer Boedart Hoey, (919) 875-3077

Executive Vice President & CEO
Rick Thomas
Senior Vice President, Corporate Relations
Nelle Hotchkiss

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Why Do We Send You Carolina Country Magazine?
Your cooperative sends you Carolina Country as a convenient, economical way to share with its members information about services, director elections, meetings and management decisions. The magazine also carries legal notices that otherwise would be published in other media at greater cost.

Your co-op's board of directors authorizes a subscription to Carolina Country on behalf of the membership at a cost of less than $4 per year.

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EPA regulation of CO_2 will affect electric cooperatives' cost of doing business

Kirk Johnson

Steve Johnson of Electric Co-op Today recently interviewed Kirk Johnson, vice president of energy and environmental policy for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), on the issues surrounding U.S. climate change policy. Excerpts follow.

Q. Is climate change legislation dead for the year?

A. With Congress, it's "never say never," but Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid abandoned his efforts to bring a climate change bill to the Senate floor because the votes are not there to pass it. Because of the possibility of a filibuster in the Senate, it's difficult to proceed with major legislation unless you have 60 votes in hand. There's no indication at this time that there are 60 votes for any kind of climate bill.

Q. Does that mean EPA [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency] will be regulating greenhouse gases?

A. Yes. This is not a proposal; this is a reality. EPA has finalized regulations that will regulate greenhouse gas emissions for the first time from transportation and stationary sources, like power plants, under the Clean Air Act. That will start in January. Sen. Jay Rockefeller is sponsoring a bill that would impose a two-year moratorium on climate change regulations from EPA. NRECA is in favor of that time-out because we believe that the Clean Air Act is the wrong vehicle for regulation. The Rockefeller bill would give Congress time to put together a different approach to the issue, instead of leaving it to EPA.

Q. Why is this important to co-op members?

A. Our CEO, Glenn English, has emphasized that keeping electric bills affordable should be at the heart of this debate. So it's important for co-ops to use every opportunity to get the message of affordability across.

Q. What exactly is meant by EPA regulation?

A. In January, EPA is set to start regulation of greenhouse gas emissions from power plants and factories, depending on their level of emissions or increased emissions. Next year, all sources that emit 100,000 tons of greenhouse gases will have to limit their emissions as a condition of getting permits they need to build new facilities, or modify or expand existing facilities. Plants and factories will have to show that they are using the "best available control technology" to limit emissions. We can't say yet what co-ops will need to do to comply with the "best available control technology."

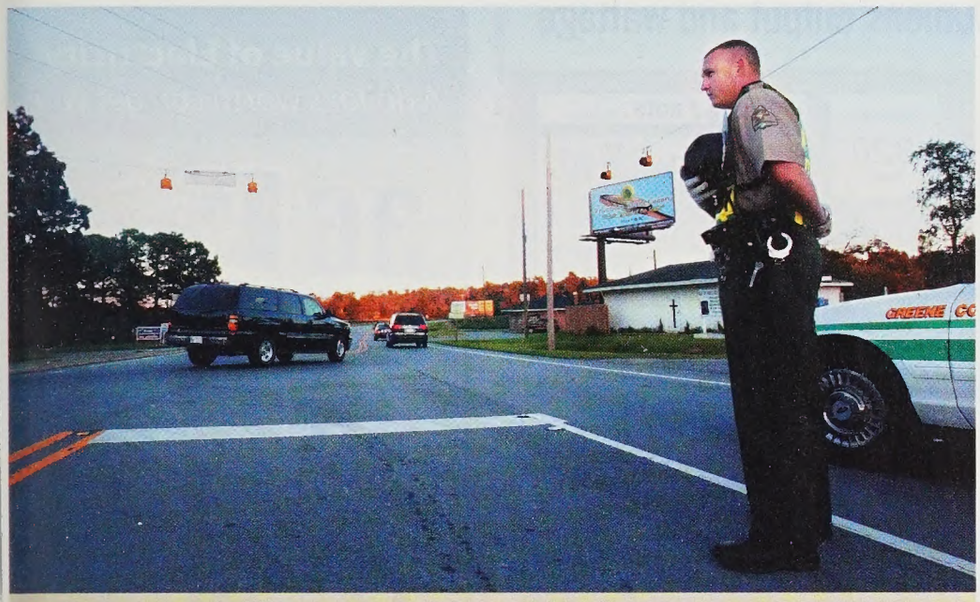
Q. Why is EPA doing this?

A. Last December, Lisa Jackson, the EPA administrator, signed a document that declared atmospheric concentrations of six greenhouse gases—carbon dioxide, in particular—threaten the public health and welfare of current and future generations. Just about every aspect of this will end up in court.

Q. What can co-ops do to be prepared for this?

A. Co-ops need to recognize the reality that CO_2 regulation is the law of the land, unless a court overturns EPA's actions. In the larger view, co-ops need to make plans to adjust to the new regulations, even as we work to find a better long-term solution.

Contact Congress
For more information and to contact your Congressional representatives, call (877) 40BALANCE (877-402-2526) or go online at: www.findabalancedsolution.com



May he rest in peace

Jon-Michael Willis is the Greene County deputy sheriff shown in this photo by Donnaree Hardy that ran in Carolina Country in 2005 when he joined other members of Sheriff Lemmie Smith's department in their customary honoring of local funeral processions. This past July 28, five days before his 32nd birthday, deputy Willis was shot to death while responding to a local domestic disturbance call. He was the son of James and Hope Willis of Ayden. Foremost among his favorite activities was time with his children, daughter Hevin Nichole, 11, and son, Dusty James, 3. A memorial fund for the children has been set up. Dusty & Hevin Willis Fund, First Citizens Bank, 110 North Greene St. Snow Hill, NC 28580-1408. (252) 747-5838.

The old International Harvester

When I was about 7, we lived in one of my grandfather's houses that did not have electricity. Some time around 1948 to 1950, Rutherford Electric came through our area and connected outlying houses to their line. This was a very exciting time for us: electric lights and no more iceman three times a week! No more spoiled milk and food in the icebox!

Through the co-op, my parents bought an electric range (General Electric, I think) and an International Harvester refrigerator. We could make ice and ice cream and keep everything cool. With five kids in the family it got its share of abuse. I was the oldest of the five, my dad was hospitalized a lot, and my mother had to work in the hosiery factory. It fell upon me to get breakfast and after-school snacks for my siblings. So I was master of the kitchen and the refrigerator most of the time.

What makes this memory special is that the I. H. refrigerator is still in the old house, which is not livable, and it still runs. I keep the power on the old house just so the refrigerator can continue to run. I have to defrost it occasionally but that's OK. What a testimonial to I.H.

Don Peeler, Vale, Rutherford EMC

Reflections in the stone

Kudos to Marissa Linton, Tri-County EMC, for the photo taken at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and what she "saw" ["Glimpses of the Youth Tour," September 2010. I too saw the memorial when we took students there on a class trip. After developing my photos and seeing my reflection I too had the same thought.

When my father passed, and Mom and I went to select the headstone, I asked if she would mind if it were a black marble one. I told her, "You know, Mom, when I will see my reflection in the polished part I will see what my father accomplished in his life time." She agreed.

Thank you to the young woman who designed the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. It's more than just a memorial and piece of stone.

Irene Vallone, Waxhaw, Union Power Cooperative

The end of the road

Every fall, my Dad and I make the three-hour drive from Apex to the inner coast of North Carolina. Hoping to catch that record trout or trophy red drum, we leave before the sunrise. As we drive east, we pass Wilbur's Bar-B-Que in Goldsboro and Kings Family Restaurant in Kinston before the first pigs even hit the cooker. Our truck slows while reaching the Neuse River Tackle Shop in Kinston so we can purchase tackle supplies. Our eyes gaze west as we cross the Neuse River Bridge on N.C. 17 to twinkling lights from the Tryon Palace and historic downtown New Bern.

As we reach the banks of Oriental, that orange glimmer of the autumn sun begins to rise over the Neuse River. While launching our boat, we go over last minute details and debate over who will decide the first fishing hole. Our outboard engine fires up, breaking the early morning silence. Jumping mullet and menhaden scatter from the wake as we point our boat towards the east. Chasing that rising sun, we leave the sleepy town of Oriental and the end of the road behind. But our journey is just beginning.

Kyle Crawford, Apex

Contact us

Website: www.carolinacountry.com
E-mail: editor@carolinacountry.com
Phone: (919) 875-3062
Fax: (919) 878-3970
Mail: 3400 Sumner Blvd.
Raleigh, NC 27616
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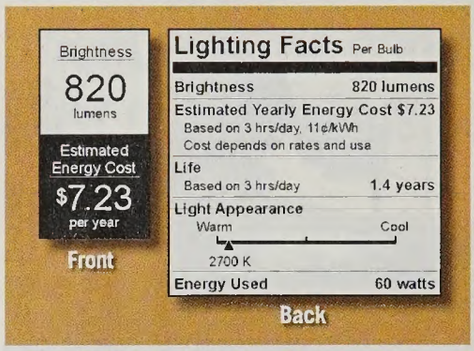
New light bulb label will show lumens output and wattage

New "Lighting Facts" labels are coming to U.S. light bulb packaging in mid-2011. The new labels will show a bulb's lumens as a measure of light output instead of watts. A graphic on the front of bulb packages will display how many lumens a bulb delivers. Other label information will include wattage, appearance (warm, cool), and estimated energy use and life expectancy.



New bulb labels show lumens as a measure of light output.

Consumers have been accustomed to judging output of traditional incandescent light bulbs by their wattage, i.e. high wattage bulbs delivered more light. Lumens, however, more accurately measure a bulb's light output and is especially important given new efficient bulbs' performance. For example, a 40-watt incandescent bulb has a light output of about 500 lumens. A CFL (compact fluorescent) that puts out 500 lumens might consume 10 watts. And an LED (light-emitting diode) light that produces 500 lumens can consume even fewer than 10 watts.

The usual wattage amount—how much electrical power the bulb consumes—will still be shown on the labels.

Bulbs that contain mercury will be required to disclose that on the package, and include a link to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's site that details how to clean up a broken mercury-laden bulb.

Susan Flythe succeeds Jim Kinghorn at Cape Hatteras Electric

Susan Flythe, manager of finance and administration, has been selected by the Cape Hatteras Electric Cooperative board of directors to be the cooperative's next executive vice president and general manager, succeeding Jim Kinghorn. The transition is expected to be complete by January.

Flythe moved to Hatteras Island to be employed by the cooperative in March 2002. As the manager of finance and administration, she oversees customer service, billing, warehouse, human resources, information technology and finance functions. She has also been the cooperative's representative to the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives' political action executive committee. Prior to coming to CHEC, Flythe was the vice-president of accounting for Pee Dee Electric Cooperative in Darlington, SC.

A native of West Virginia, Susan Flythe graduated from Marietta College in 1991 with a bachelor's degree in accounting. She obtained her Certified Public Accountant certificate in 1992. She lives in Buxton with her husband, Paul, and daughter, Chloe. They are members of the Buxton United Methodist Church.

Energy Star appliances are tax-free Nov. 5–7

North Carolina's annual tax-free weekend on Energy Star-qualified products will be in effect from Friday through Sunday, Nov. 5–7. The following appliances that bear the blue Energy Star label (an efficiency designation by the federal Environmental Protection Agency) as listed below may be sold free of state sales and use tax. Check with your appliance dealers to see if they participate.

- Clothes washers
- Freezers and refrigerators
- Air conditioners
- Airsource heat pumps and geothermal heat pumps
- Ceiling fans
- Dehumidifiers
- Programmable thermostats

The Value of Electricity

A dollar's worth can get you:

36 (intense) hours of gaming

48 hours of watching TV

72 freshly-ironed shirts

72 hours of laptop Internet access

100 hot pots of coffee

375 pieces of toast (nicely browned)

Sources: U.S. Department of Energy; National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Find a Balanced Solution

Electric cooperative members are encouraged to visit the newly updated website Find A Balanced Solution intended to put members in touch with elected officials regarding energy-related issues. At issue now are moves to enact federal legislation that could substantially raise consumers' electric bills.

To see the upgrades and participate, visit www.findabalancedsolution.com

Try This!

The next generation of water heaters?

New heat pump water heaters signal a rebirth of an energy-saving technology

A heat pump water heater needs space of at least 10 feet square to ensure adequate air exchange. An open basement, a utility room, or—as seen with this GE Hybrid Water Heater—a garage, will work.

Water heating has become the second largest user of energy in an average home, accounting for approximately 20 percent of residential energy consumption.

To save energy, consumers have wrapped water heaters in blankets or wrapped hot water pipes in insulation. While those practices are good and should continue, a new type of water heating product is entering the market, and it may lower energy consumption and save consumers money.

Heat pump water heaters, while not a new technology, are experiencing a rebirth. Some major water heater manufacturers and other appliance companies have entered the market with a new and improved generation of heat pump water heaters.

How they work

Heat pump water heaters come in two types. The more expensive "integrated" model replaces an electric resistance water heater with one that combines a heat pump with a storage tank. The second version adds a heat pump unit to an existing electric water heater.

In both versions, a heat pump circulates a refrigerant, which absorbs heat from surrounding air before it passes through a compressor to maximize heat output. Essentially, heat drawn from the air transfers to water in the tank.

While a heat pump water heater can produce most of the hot water a family requires, a backup electric resistance element in the tank takes over when outside air becomes too cold or when consumers need extra hot water. In summer, cool exhaust air can be released into the vicinity where the heat pump water heater is located, assisting home cooling, or it can be returned outside via ducts.

Because a heat pump water heater uses electricity to move heat rather than generate heat, it consumes roughly half the electricity of a conventional electric resistance model. This efficiency qualifies integrated heat pump water heaters for an Energy Star rating, a first for electric water heaters.

But this added efficiency comes with a high price tag. Integrated units sell for $1,400 to $2,000—more than twice the cost of standard electric resistance water heater. Depending on electric rates and the installed cost of a heat pump water heater, including any financial incentives, payback for the purchase can take as little as three years. Check to see if your cooperative offers incentives.

Heat pump water heaters can be most efficient in North Carolina's warm and damp climates, where homes benefit from the appliances' cooling and dehumidifying features.

A heat pump water heater needs space of at least 10 feet square to ensure adequate air exchange. An open basement, a utility room—or, in some areas, a garage—will work.

Noise becomes another consideration when deciding where to place a unit. While conventional electric resistance water heaters operate quietly, most heat pump water heaters have noise levels similar to window air conditioners.

Visit www.energystar.gov and search for heat pump water heaters to learn more.

By Alice Clam, a technology writer for the Cooperative Research Network, a service of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Can you help others save energy?
Send your conservation ideas or questions to us: P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611, or E-mail: editor@carolinacountry.com

Get the facts before buying into wind power

More and more people are attracted to the idea of generating their own electric power, and small wind turbines are one of the choices for "backyard" renewable energy systems.

The most popular residential-scale wind turbines can generate 2 to 10 kilowatts of power—about one-third to one-half of what a typical home needs. In recent years, small wind turbines have become more reliable and, to a degree, prices have come down. More dealers are offering better choices, and more experienced installers are available.

But careful study and your co-op's assistance can ensure you know the facts before buying one. It's also important to keep in mind it is always more cost effective to make your home more energy efficient than it is to install renewable energy. Adding insulation, installing high efficiency heating and cooling equipment and sealing ductwork are good examples of measures that should be undertaken prior to installing any renewable resources. These improvements will often save much more energy than renewable energy systems would generate and cost much less.

Whether or not installing a wind turbine at your home is a good idea also depends on two big factors: your goal and location.

What is your goal?

If your motivation is to save money (to spend less on electricity than you do today) or to make money (expecting the small wind turbine will earn you a profit through selling power back to your electric co-op), proceed with care. Even though federal tax credits and utility incentives and rebates have helped lower the cost for some, in most North Carolina locations it remains difficult to generate electricity at a price equal to or lower than what you'll obtain from your electric co-op. While wind may be free, the equipment needed to capture it is not. And wind doesn't blow all the time.

This wind and solar display is an example of a small renewable energy system that could be placed in a residential area.

Source: Maquoketa Valley Electric Cooperative/Iowa

Electric utilities are required by law to buy your excess power. But in many areas they are only required to pay the same price they pay any other power generator—what in utility jargon is called "avoided cost." But even where your bill might be credited for wind power at retail rates, called net metering, the sale of those kilowatts won't make you rich. Earning enough to equal the cost of installing a wind turbine, which runs from several thousand dollars to $50,000, can take several years to several decades.

Fully factor in your location

In more densely settled areas, local zoning laws may prohibit wind turbine construction. But in any location, you must know just how much wind you have, day after day. Average wind speed is critical.

While the federal government has mapped out average wind speeds across the country (www.nrel.gov/wind), each site is unique, affected by factors such as elevation and tree obstruction. There can also be a huge difference between wind speeds at the 300-foot heights of large-scale wind turbines and at the much lower heights of small wind turbines.

If you are seriously interested in wind energy generation on your property, you should first conduct a study with a wind measuring system (anemometer) for at least one year to truly assess the actual wind over the course of a year. Such measurements are better than relying solely on vendors or wind charts. Measuring the site's potential can reveal the true economics. A year's worth of data could prevent disappointment if the wind doesn't blow as much as you think.

Finally, check with your electric co-op well in advance of making a wind turbine purchase. Being aware of your co-op's policies and procedures associated with interconnecting a wind system to the grid will avoid headaches and, maybe, unexpected costs. Your co-op may be able to help you estimate those costs in advance and can also help you find additional energy efficiency opportunities.

Sources: Bob Gibson, Cooperative Research Network, a service of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Rick Schroeder and Rich Radil, GreenCo Solutions, a green services company owned by most of North Carolina's electric cooperatives.

Wind power resources

Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency, www.dsireusa.org

NC GreenPower, www.ncgreenpower.org

North Carolina Solar Center, www.ncsc.ncsu.edu

Appalachian State University, http://wind.appstate.edu

Energy Efficiency quick tip

Residential-scale wind turbines can generate about 2 kilowatts to 10 kilowatts of power—about a third to half of what the home needs.

STOP
the EPA from bypassing Congress on greenhouse gas regulations.

The EPA has begun writing regulations to manage greenhouse gases under the Clean Air Act. But existing law does not allow the EPA to consider economic impact. That is the role of Congress. Contact Congress and tell them not to let the EPA do significant harm to our already struggling economy. Ask them to reform the energy policy to consider both environmental and economic impact.

North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives
Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperatives

877-40-BALANCE

Find A Balanced Solution

FindABalancedSolution.com

ASK

Ask Congress to pass a comprehensive energy bill that is both fair and affordable. Tell them to reshape our country's energy policy and Find A Balanced Solution.

The Town and The Co-op

The town of Farmville and Pitt & Greene EMC agree on where they can extend electric service

By Michael E.C. Gery

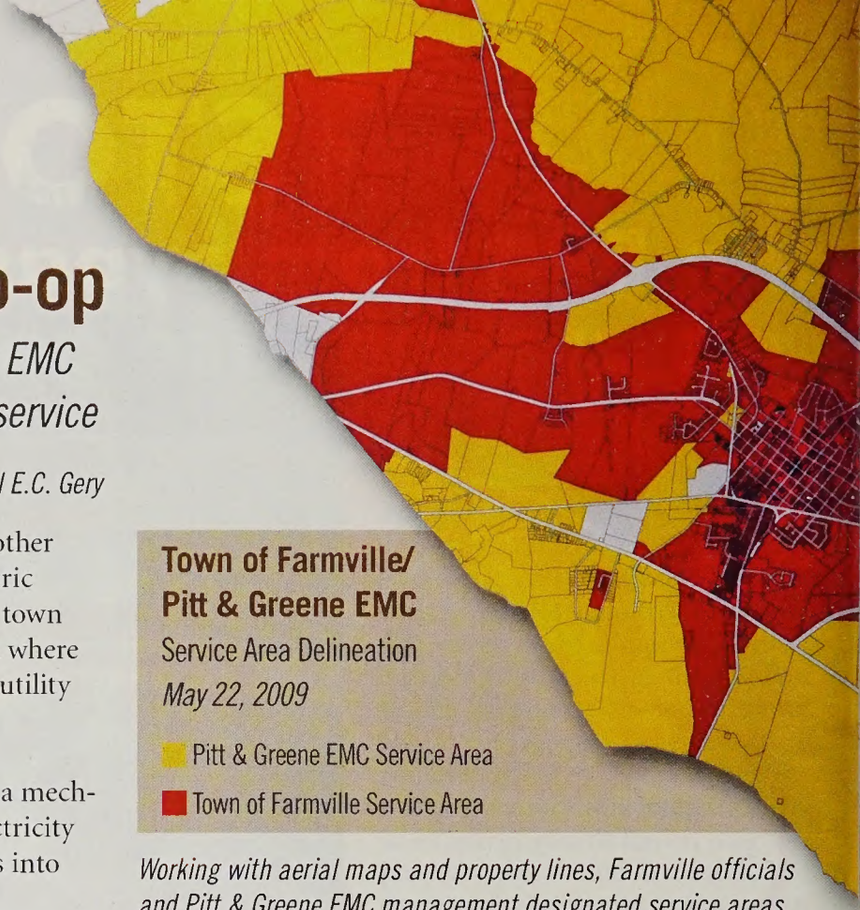
Not long ago, if the town of Farmville—or any other North Carolina muncipality with its own electric utility—wanted to add electric customers, the town simply would run poles and electric lines to the area where the new cusomers were located, regardless of which utility has been assigned to serve that area.

No longer.

In 2007 a new state law encouraged and provided a mechanism for muncipalities to negotiate with other electricity providers before they extend municipal electric lines into areas served by other providers.

The Town of Farmville recently concluded such a negotiation successfully with Pitt & Greene EMC, the Touchstone Energy cooperative that serves more than 8,700 member accounts in Pitt and Greene counties, as well as parts of Edgecombe, Lenoir, Wayne and Wilson counties.

"Common sense prevailed," said Mark A. Suggs, general manager of Pitt & Greene EMC, who led the co-op's board of directors in the discussions. Once the territory issue with Farmville reached the problem stage, Suggs remembered, "I said, 'If we could just take aerial maps of all the properties and sit down with some colored pencils, we could solve this thing in a matter of hours.' Well, it took one hour and 40 minutes."


Town of Farmville/
Pitt & Greene EMC
Service Area Delineation
May 22, 2009
Pitt & Greene EMC Service Area
Town of Farmville Service Area

Working with aerial maps and property lines, Farmville officials and Pitt & Greene EMC management designated service areas for the town-owned electric utility and the co-op.

Which utility serves which areas?

Incorporated in 1872, Farmville today comprises about 3.1 square miles and has about 4,800 residents. It is one of 76 North Carolina towns and cities that operate their own electric utilities. When electrical power first came to Pitt County in the 1930s and 1940s, both the Farmville utility and the co-op shared the same Farmville office and built their systems side-by-side. In 1950, Pitt & Greene built its own office. In 1965, North Carolina passed legislation that assigned service territories to electric cooperatives and the state's investor-owned electric utilities, such as Progress Energy (Carolina Power & Light in those days). But municipally-owned utilities were not included in that legislation. Since then, disputes have arisen statewide between co-ops and towns over who served where. The 2007 law effectively calmed those disputes, and the Farmville agreement is proof that it works.

The Town of Farmville from time to time would run electric service lines to newly annexed property, even if Pitt & Greene EMC already was serving the same neighborhood. Naturally, this would raise the tension level between the two electric suppliers. "For many years," said Farmville Mayor Bobby Evans, "the strain was just below the surface of operations, always in danger of rising to the top at the slightest deviation from the norm."

The issue came to a head recently when property at the interchange of Hwy. 264 and Hwy. 258 attracted commercial businesses—a Food Lion, Bojangles, and a McDonalds. "With the possibility of a relatively quiet area now becoming a corridor for commercial growth in Farmville," said Mayor Evans, "it was obvious a more formal agreement between the two entities was desirable."

A local engineering firm supplied aerial maps showing all property lines in and around Farmville. "Once everyone saw the pictures," Mark Suggs said, "a solution came easily." The parties began at "the back property lines" and divided the territory in sections that made sense in light of where the two utilities already had facilities.

The diagrammed territory map is now under review by the N.C. Utilities Commission, which by law passes final judgment on such agreements.

"Now the town knows its footprint," Suggs said. "And we no longer design our system's growth opportunities for areas we may not serve. It simplifies economic development."

Just as in the old days, the co-op and the town are back to working side by side. They jointly have an industrial park in which Pitt & Greene EMC provides electric power and Farmville provides the other utilities. "And if they want to annex somewhere we serve," Suggs said, "we provide electricity, they do the other utilities."

"It's a road map for progress that should serve both organizations and their constituents for many years to come," said Mayor Evans.

"The past has passed," Suggs added.

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WHY WE TRIM TREES

Electric cooperatives check growth along power lines to keep them safe and help prevent outages

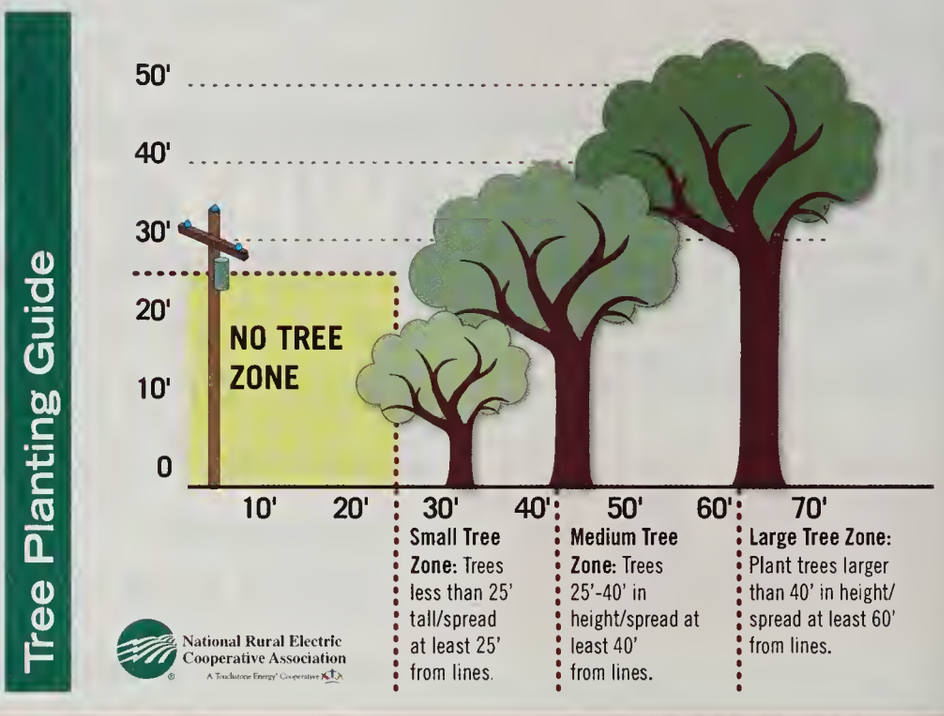
Trees may seem harmless on a calm, sunny day. But add a strong wind or ice accumulation on a stormy night, and trees may threaten your home's electric supply.

"Most of our storm outages are related to trees contacting power lines," says Tommy C. Greer, director of job training and safety for the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives. "Regular trimming of trees and brush along power lines helps prevent the number of outages as well as blinks."

Electricity interruptions can occur when branches break and fall across power lines, or when trees tumble onto power lines. When strong winds blow, limbs growing too close to power lines may sway and touch wires. These momentary power disruptions (called "blinks" or "blips") can damage computers and other sensitive electronic equipment and leave digital clocks flashing. And then there's arcing—when electricity uses a nearby tree as a path to the ground—which could spark a fire.

Your electric cooperative sends crews on a scheduled basis to clear growth away from power lines as a way of reducing potential outages and safety risks. As a rule of thumb, 25 feet of ground-to-sky clearance should be available on each side of utility poles to give power lines plenty of space.

Maintanence along power line rights



Why not bury all electric lines?

Your cooperative must consider many financial, logistical and local issues when determining whether to bury power lines.

Underground and overhead technology differ from each other. Installing underground lines requires training and equipment that are not the same as for overhead lines.

Generally, overhead lines are more affordable to construct, repair and maintain. They're more accessible for maintenance and repair. Faults on the line can be visually inspected, and repairs are usually more quickly achieved.

However, overhead lines are viewed by some as unsightly and are vulnerable to damage caused by falling trees and limbs, as well as vehicle crashes.

Underground lines are not visible and are protected from damage caused by falling trees and errant vehicles. However, when underground cables fail, locating them and repairing them requires special equipment, which usually slows the power restoration process. Also, in a flood emergency, restoration on underground lines cannot occur until the water recedes.

Electric cooperatives generally place power lines underground in new, planned residential developments. Routing the lines involves relatively easy right-of-way access, and laying them requires little or no disruption to existing buildings. The lines cost more to install than overhead lines, and the higher costs typically are contained in a developer's costs and pricing structure.

Installing underground lines is considerably more difficult and expensive in established residential and commercial areas. Additional right-of-way or easements may be required. Working around existing homes, buildings and other utility lines generally increases costs.

of way has led to a drop in vegetation problems. For the first time ever, no outages were reported last year along transmission lines anywhere in the U.S., according to the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), which oversees reliability of the transmission system that blankets most of North America.

Making the cut

Typically, a cooperative's crews will not remove trees. Instead, they trim away limbs and branches too close to power lines.

Your co-op respects your property. Tree maintenance decisions are made based on the amount of clearance needed around wires, as well as the voltage coursing through lines, the tree's growth rate, and the right-of-way maintenance cycle (how frequently trimming along the line is performed).

"The co-op's primary objective is to prevent electrical hazards as well as outages," explains Tommy Greer.

For long-standing trees that have grown too close to overhead lines, several trimming options are employed. A V-cut prunes branches back toward the center of the tree's crown, basically carving a V-shape through the middle to provide proper line clearance. If limbs grow too close to lines on one side of a tree, the crew will side-trim—branches on the entire side are removed. Finally, the notch method clips limbs on one side of a tree from the top to a safe area underneath, leaving a canopy that will not cause any problems.

In general, co-op crews will not work on trees under a building's service drop (the line that runs from the pole to your building).

Other causes of outages

Trees and branches are the primary cause of outages, but other offenders include vehicles running into poles or animals getting too close to pole-mount transformers or equipment in substations. Electrical components can also be damaged by lightning and flying objects such as drifting balloons. To help reduce power interruptions from these causes, co-ops use tree trimming, lightning arrestors, line patrols and animal guards.

What you can do

If you want to remove a tree near a power line, your electric co-op will work with you. Contact your co-op before tackling the project on your own.

When you plant trees, keep utility poles in mind. In general, tall-growing trees or varieties with wide canopies shouldn't be placed near utility poles. A local nursery can provide information outlining how tall and quickly a tree will grow. Several guides are available, including the Arbor Day Foundation at www.arborday.org.

Stay alert to children climbing trees. Contacting a live wire could be fatal.

If you notice any dead, dying, or severely leaning trees near power lines in your area, contact your cooperative.

Inspecting the EnergyUnited right of way are Eddie Bridges (left) of the North Carolina Wildlife Habitat Foundation and Jay Jordon of the National Wild Turkey Federation.

Protecting habitat under power lines

EnergyUnited, the Touchstone Energy cooperative serving more than 120,000 member-consumers in 19 North Carolina counties, has been recognized on numerous occasions for its award-winning right-of-way maintenance program. Its science-based integrated vegetation management system selectively applies environmentally safe herbicides to control growth in the right-of-way corridors. The herbicides used are approved by the Environmental Protection Agency and applied by trained and licensed personnel.

In coordination with two organizations—the National Wild Turkey Federation's Energy for Wildlife Program and the Pollinator Partnership—EnergyUnited crews preserve plant and wildlife habitat, including federally designated endangered species, while caring for right-of-way areas. The selective herbicide applications interrupt the photosynthesis process on undesirable vegetation, leaving grasses, shrubs, vines and legumes to flourish. The programs not only promote biodiversity and provide food and shelter for wildlife, but also help control erosion and reduce air pollution.

"We also maintain safe working conditions in these areas," says Steve McCorkle, System Forester for EnergyUnited. "If there's a power interruption, crews need safe access to our poles and equipment."

It's a system that works. EnergyUnited kept power on for its entire membership 99.97 percent of the time in 2009, one of the best reliability records in the nation.

ADVERTISEMENT

Only 46 states remain in free state $2 bill giveaway

Hotline operators can barely keep up with all of the calls because with each vault pack residents get a free state $2 bill, so before calling the World Reserve, residents are being asked to make sure their state still appears on the list of remaining states below

NEW STATE $2 BILLS: Each of the new state $2 bills being overlaid and released exclusively by the World Reserve feature their state's skyline and significant state symbol with President Thomas Jefferson on the front.

NATIONAL TREASURE: The reverse of the $2 bill features a detailed engraving of John Trumbull's famous 1820 painting "The Signing of the Declaration of Independence." The original hangs in the National Portrait Gallery in Washington D.C.

REMAINING STATES

Only residents of these states can still get their state $2 bills free:

Alabama	Montana
Alaska	Nebraska
Arizona	Nevada
Arkansas	New Hampshire
Colorado	New Jersey
Connecticut	New Mexico
Delaware	New York
Florida	North Carolina
Georgia	North Dakota
Hawaii	Ohio
Idaho	Oklahoma
Illinois	Oregon
Indiana	Rhode Island
Iowa	South Carolina
Kansas	South Dakota
Kentucky	Tennessee
Louisiana	Texas
Maine	Utah
Maryland	Virginia
Michigan	Washington
Minnesota	West Virginia
Mississippi	Wisconsin
Missouri	Wyoming

Residents of the remaining 46 states have just 7 days to get their state's new $2 bills free

Only existing state $2 bills being given away free to the first 3,956 residents from the remaining states who beat the deadline to order the state $2 bill vault packs containing 4 protective estate wallets each loaded with its own state $2 bill

By Joan Tedeschi
Universal Media Syndicate

It's like a run on the banks. The phones just keep ringing off the hook.

That's because state residents are actually getting the World Reserve's exclusive state overlaid $2 bills for free.

The only thing residents need to do to get their new state bills is call 1-866-497-6717 or one of the five Overflow Hotlines right now to get a state $2 bill vault pack containing 4 protective estate wallets, each loaded with its own state $2 bill for just $12 and shipping per wallet. The first 3,956 residents from each remaining state who do are also getting their state's new $2 bill in a protective estate wallet and a Certificate of Authenticity free.

This free giveaway starts at precisely 8:00am today. But only the first 3,956 state residents who call to beat the 7-day deadline will instantly be awarded their state $2 bills for free.

Special Toll Free Hotlines have been set up because you can't get these exclusive bills at local banks, credit unions or even the Federal Reserve. They're only being released directly to state residents exclusively by the private World Reserve.

These crisp state $2 bills featuring the exclusively designed state overlay are so precious you would never even dream of carrying them around in an ordinary leather wallet.

That's why they are

■ **FREE PUBLIC GIVEAWAY:** Shown above are the World Reserve's state $2 bill vault packs that residents from each state are trying to get their hands on. That's because they are the only existing state $2 bills. But only the first 3,956 state residents who call before the 7-day deadline to order the vault packs are getting their state $2 bill for free. So if lines are busy keep trying, all calls will be answered.

being released in individually loaded rich protective estate wallets. They are so impressive, everyone will swear they must have been taken right from the Governor's desk.

"Everything in our vault may soon be gone. So residents who want to get them now had better hurry and call," said Jefferson Marshall, Executive Director of the private World Reserve Monetary Exchange.

Some collectors are always trying to snatch up all the original $2 bills issued by the Government they can get their hands on. They know that $2 bills are almost impossible to find in your pocket change these days.

Originally issued in 1928, the currently designed $2 bills have largely been locked away in the bowels of the U.S. Federal Reserve vaults, rarely distributed by banks and almost never seen in circulation.

The $2 bills issued by the Treasury Department's Bureau of Engraving and Printing, makers of all the nation's paper currency, make up less than 1% of the $670 billion in genuine U.S. currency that circulates worldwide, according to the U.S. Department of Treasury.

"That's why I've authorized a limited number of genuine Government issued $2 bills to be overlaid with each state's exclusive design and released from our private vault reserve to the first 3,956 state residents who call to beat the 7-day deadline for free. For now dealers can't get the state $2 bill vault packs to make sure residents can get what they need," Marshall said.

"These exclusive state $2 bills will be highly sought after and are extremely popular to hand out as gifts for friends and family. They are the perfect gift for any occasion," he said.

"That's why this announcement is being so widely advertised, to make sure the first 3,956 state residents who call from each state have a chance to get their own state $2 bills for free," said Marshall.

They are sure to impress because most people have never even seen one of these newly enhanced state $2 bills featuring their state's skyline and significant state symbol with President Thomas Jefferson on the front.

"Since the World Reserve has the only existing state $2 bills, residents who want more than 10 state $2 bill vault packs containing 4 protective estate wallets, each loaded with its own state $2 bill must submit requests in writing so there will be no hoarding," said Marshall.

"You better believe we will be strictly enforcing the limits so that we can guarantee there will be enough vault packs for the first 3,956 State residents who call in the next 7 days," Marshall said. ■

■ **LIMITED RELEASE BEGINS:** This is the entire 50 state $2 Bill Collection™ shown off by the World Reserve. You can't get these exclusive state overlaid $2 bills from local banks, credit unions or even the Federal Reserve. But getting the entire 50 State $2 Bill Collection™ may be hard, since the release is being restricted. That's why the World Reserve Monetary Exchange has also decided to release all 50 states together in one complete collection to state residents who call 1-866-497-6717 in the next 7 days.

HOW TO GET YOUR FREE STATE $2 BILLS

RESIDENTS OF THE REMAINING 46 STATES ONLY

The special Toll Free Hotlines are open to state residents only. The first 3,956 state residents who call to beat the 7-day deadline get their state $2 bills free beginning at 8:00am today.

The only thing residents need to do is get the state $2 bill vault pack containing 4 protective estate wallets, each loaded with its own state $2 bill for just $12 per wallet and shipping. The first 3,956 residents from the remaining states who do are also getting their new state $2 bill free.

The World Reserve Monetary Exchange is releasing the exclusive state overlaid $2 bills free for the next 7 days. If you miss the deadline you'll be turned away and forced to wait for future announcements in this publication or others, if any. There is a strict limit of 10 state $2 bill vault packs per household. To claim yours call the special Toll Free Hotline number below or visit us online.

SPECIAL TOLL FREE HOTLINE:
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www.State2DollarBill.com
CODE: NL204

OVERFLOW HOTLINES

1-866-497-6723 | 1-866-561-3060 | 1-866-584-2443
1-866-545-7375 | CODE: NL204 | 1-866-545-7705

WHAT TO DO IF ALL LINES ARE BUSY

If you are a resident of one of the 46 remaining states trying to get the state $2 bills within the 7-day deadline and have not been able to reach an operator by calling the special Toll Free Hotline or any of the five Overflow Hotline numbers, follow the steps below or visit us online.

1) Immediately call the Toll Free Hotline number below.
2) You will then be connected to a special operator who will ask you for the code number below and arrange delivery of your free State $2 bill.

Call Toll Free: 1-866-561-3784 Code: NL204
www.State2DollarBill.com

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New to western North Carolina agriculture, hops are adding aroma and stability to local beer and the local economy

Photos and text by Hannah Miller

If you're traveling through rural western North Carolina and come upon climbing plants wrapping themselves around a trellis, don't automatically think "pole beans." If the plants are 17½ feet tall and the trellis covers an acre or so, think "hops," the plants that give beer its flavor and aroma. For the first time in many years, there's a serious effort under way to cultivate the plant in the state.

In the country's early years, says Amy Hamilton, research specialist with NCSU's Mountain Crops Research and Extension Center in Mill River, "the hops came over with the settlers." But disease and pests that thrived in North Carolina's moderate climate spelled an end to local growing, and serious hops farming left in favor of drier growing regions in Washington and Oregon.

The current popularity of locally grown food, plus farmers' search for alternative crops to replace tobacco, have brought it back into the sights of some 15 farmers in Madison, Henderson, Buncombe and Haywood counties and the Watauga-Ashe area. Many farmers, says Hamilton, are no longer able to make money from tobacco and conventional crops. "They're not able to keep their farms going." So they're looking to nontraditional crops like medicinal herbs, organic produce, ethnic vegetables, and hops.

Two of the pioneers are Haywood EMC members Scott Grahl and Stephanie Willis of Winding River Hops in Clyde. Until two years ago, their one-acre plot held little more than a brush pile, a blackberry thicket and a couple of trees. Then, assisted by a $6,000 grant from Cooperative Extension's WNC AgOptions, they bulldozed the brush and erected a trellis to hold 1,320 plants. The plants are grown from rhizomes, and their cones, containing the acids and oils that give beer its flavor, are hand-harvested. This year, Winding River harvested 125 pounds and sold it to four western North Carolina breweries and a brewery supply house catering to home brewers. Prices paid by western North Carolina brewers in 2010 ranged from $10 to $15 per pound for "wet" or fresh hops like Grahl's, one brewer said. Western North Carolina home brewers reportedly bought their preferred version, dried hops, from growers at $2 to $4 an ounce.

A fully mature acre, says Chris Reedy, coordinator of the Southern Appalachian Hops Guild, can yield about 1,000 pounds. But Grahl's plants, like most in the state, are a long way from maturity. All the North Carolina plots are less than five years old and under two acres in size, says Reedy. "You're not going to see significant yields the first three or four years," he says. "Next year, we'll start seeing significant yields."

"The overall health and vigor of the plant is what my concentration has been on this year," says Grahl, who estimated that he and Willis spent $20,000 to get the hop yard established. That included fertilizer, herbicide, trellis, rhizomes, improving the soil, and their own labor. "It costs between $5,000 and $10,000 to set up a trellis system to last you 20 years," estimates Reedy.

A local market of pubs and breweries

Growers seem to have no trouble finding a market, says Hamilton. Asheville and the surrounding area are home to some 10 brew pubs and mini-breweries, and an online vote proclaimed it "Beer City USA" this year. Home brewers also abound.

In a local-foods stronghold like Asheville, says Jason Caughman of Pisgah Brewing Co. in Black Mountain, the appeal of a local-hops beer is "huge. It's great." Pisgah brought out Burnette's Fresh Hop Pale Ale last year, using "wet" or field-fresh hops from Van Burnette's Hop'n Blueberry Farm in Buncombe County. It brewed

Burnette's again this past July for distribution and also for sale in-house as a premium beer costing $4 a pint on draft. It was, Caughman said, a "once a year, come and get it" kind of thing, with the supply expected to last a month. "The hops came straight from the field. Put in the beer the same day."

"It's good," he said. "It's a nice hoppy beer, has a lot of flavor hops and a lot of aroma hops."

Burnette's Fresh Hop Pale Ale also included some of Winding River's Nugget-variety hops. Familiar with the aroma from picking the cones, "I could taste the Nugget" in the beer, Grahl says.

Wet hops, dry hops

Hops are to malt barley what spices are to foods. Their acids and oils counteract the barley's sweetness, and add stability, aroma and flavor. Each variety is slightly different, and even the soil the hops are grown in can affect the taste. Wet hops, which Grahl says have the most flavor, have to be used immediately after harvest. Dried hops give the brewer more flexibility in timing. Dried by a variety of means, they can be vacuum-sealed in oxygen-free bags for extra longevity.

A more familiar form nationwide is the dried and pelletized hop coming out of Oregon and Washington. "You take your dried whole hops cone, and you pulverize it," says Ric Horst, general manager of EchoView Farm, a French Broad EMC member in Weaverville. When formed into pellets, he says, "It kind of looks like rabbit or goat feed."

EchoView, in its third year of growing, is investing not only in an oast (a hops kiln) to dry the hops, but also in pelletizing equipment. It now sells some dried whole hops, and by next season, it will be able not only to pelletize its own hops but those of other farmers. "Most of your breweries here in Asheville prefer pelletized hops," Horst says.

Chris Reedy at Southern Appalachian Hops Guild says that wet hops are a way for beginning growers to jump into the market. But considering the limited window for using wet hops—"You have to use them within four to eight hours of picking them"—he thinks that they will end up being only one part of the hops picture. "I think dried hops are going to have to be there," he says.

EchoView plans to offer growers a laboratory analysis of the hops, a necessity when selling to breweries, Horst says. Scott Grahl intends to start getting a laboratory analysis next year.

The five-year test

Last year, only four plants reached the top of the trellis at Winding River Hops. Grahl and Willis contented themselves with fighting weeds and adding soil nutrients. This year, he had the help of friends at harvest time, when he climbed a special ladder that reached to the top of the trellis to hand-harvest the cones. In both quantity and quality, he said, "Everything I am getting off the vines this year and selling is actually above my expectations."

At the end of five years, he says, he'll know if what he wants to prove with the cones is true: That hops can be grown successfully, even in originally-poor soil, and that they present a viable alternative for mountain farmers who want to continue farming rather than sell their land for development. If he's right, he says, he and Willis may expand to more land nearby, buy a larger trellis system and someday be able to be fulltime farmers. He presently works with Evergreen Packaging in Waynesville, and she is with the patient financial services department of Haywood County Hospital.

"We're not trying to compete with the Budweisers and the 1,000-acre hops fields of the Pacific Northwest," he says. These local growers are simply catering to the local marketplace, he says, "so a hops farmer can add something fresh and local to their local economy."

Carolina Country contributor Hannah Miller lives in Charlotte. In August's magazine she wrote about markets for North Carolina foods.

Immediately above: *Winding River partners Willis and Grahl surrounded by hops.*

Top, left: *Grahl is dwarfed by his 17½-foot-high hops plants.*

Top, middle: *The luplin gland, the part of the hops cone that holds the oils and imparts taste and aroma.*

Top, right: *Hops cones resemble small green pine cones.*

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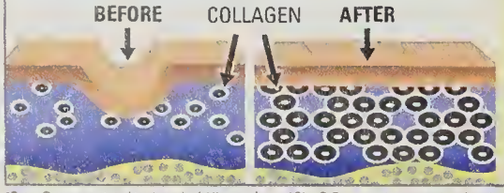

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Stone Mountain Overlook (2010)

The Blue Ridge Parkway Anniversary Series

Art by Teresa Pennington

The Blue Ridge Parkway, known as "America's Favorite Drive," is a national park comprising 469 miles of limited access highway along the Blue Ridge Mountains ridge from Shenandoah National Park in Virginia to Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina and Tennessee. The 20 million visitors who drive the parkway each year can see protected views in many places, as well as opportunities for recreation and cultural experiences. On September 11, 1935, construction of the parkway began. Although sections opened sooner, it was finally completed in 1983. Throughout 2010, the Blue Ridge Parkway has marked its 75th anniversary.

In recognition of the Blue Ridge Parkway's anniversary, Waynesville artist Teresa Pennington during the past four years issued four of her popular, meticulously rendered colored-pencil illustrations of beloved Parkway overlooks.

The prints of all scenes are available in the following sizes (all are signed and numbered limited edition prints and available online, except the mini print):

4.25" by 7" mini print (paper) $12.
Available only in the Waynesville gallery and at shows.

8.5" by 14" (paper), $95.

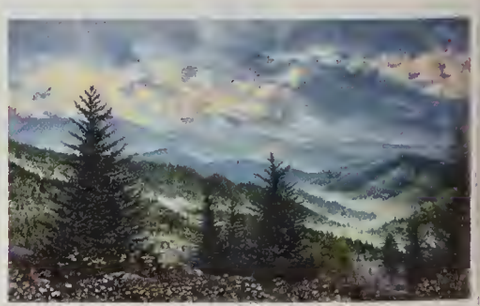
12.25" by 20" (paper and canvas), $175.

16" by 26" (paper and canvas), $250.

TPennington Art Gallery
15 N. Main St., Waynesville, NC 28786
(828) 452-9284 www.tpennington.com

Courthouse Valley Overlook (2009)

Grandfather Mountain Overlook (2008)



Richland Balsam Overlook (2007)

A simple solar catcher helps keep out the cold

By Donna Campbell Smith

On a cold sunny day I can turn my heat down, sometimes off, during the daylight hours. That is because I supplement my heat with a homemade solar collector, also known as a Sun Grabber. My landlord built the unit for me from plans I found on the Mother Earth News website.

For the heat collector to work you must have a window with an unshaded, southern exposure. The top fits the window sill, the bottom rests on the ground. The ideal angle at which to position the solar collector for our area is 45 degrees from the wall of the house. The formula is latitude plus 10 degrees. North Carolina is 35 degrees north of the equator.

The Sun Grabber is basically a box with a plywood bottom and glass top. The materials list is simple and inexpensive: 1-by-6-inch boards for the frame, plywood for the bottom, foam insulation, and glass or Plexiglas (even an old storm window will work) for the top, and caulking to keep it airtight. The foam insulation is the most expensive item on the materials list. The plans suggest Celeotex Thermax TF-610 foam insulation. That product has an aluminum foil covering.

The working principle is simple. The sun shines through the glass and is trapped by the insulation, which is sandwiched between the glass top and wood bottom with air space over and under. The cold air leaving the room sinks down to the bottom of the unit under the insulated barrier and pushes the collected warm air out the top (cold air falls, warm air rises). The cycle continues with cool air leaving the room and being replaced by the warm air. When the sun doesn't shine the unit is dormant, it doesn't pull in any cold air; it just sits there waiting for the sun to shine again.

A thermometer near the opening of my unit measures the temperature of the warm air coming into my house. It registers 90–100 degrees on sunny days no matter how cold it is outdoors. A small fan or a ceiling fan would help circulate the warm air throughout the room, but is not necessary to reap benefits from the Sun Grabber. Another perk—if free heat is not enough—is the quiet. With no motor involved there is no noise. Handles attached to the sides of the Sun Grabber make it easy to move the unit to summer storage.

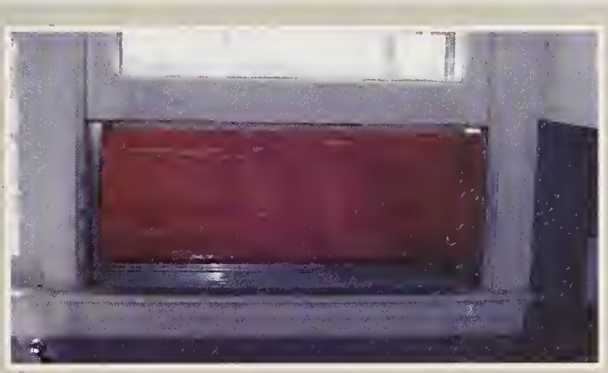
Donna Campbell Smith is a member of Wake Electric.

See plans online

Mother Earth News has compiled articles with instructions and building plans on how to build this ("simple solar heater") and other passive solar heating units on its website: www.motherearthnews.com.

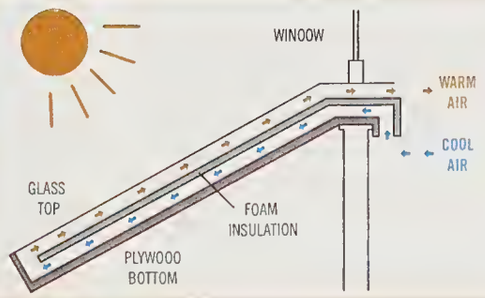
Detailed plans for building a Sun Grabber of a slightly different design by Maine Solar Energy Association can be found at this website: www.builditsolar.com.

This homemade solar heater is easy to build. The handles make moving it to summer storage easier. You don't want that hot air coming into your home during the summer.



The top of the sun catcher fits into the windowsill. The cool air from the room enters the unit from the lower opening and warm air enters the room through the opening on top. The facing board hides the openings and can be painted to match the window frame. I haven't gotten round to painting mine.

The sun catcher pumps in 90- to 100-degree air into my room on a cold sunny day.



Cutaway view from the side of the unit shows the plywood bottom, insulation in the middle with airspace under and over it, and the glass top.

Finding bargain travel for folks over 50

Empty nesters, retirees and busy baby boomers can all take advantage of travel deals to plan a great getaway. If you're over age 50, there's a bargain for you. Here are some options and resources, including some specific to North Carolina, that can help save you money while traveling.

Educational Tours: Road Scholar (the new program name for Elderhostel) offers numerous and budget-minded educational tours in all 50 states and in 90 countries around the world. Its website showcases many tours under $600, including a recent four-day tour of Great Smoky Mountains National Park that included instructors, eight meals and three nights at an inn overlooking Lake Junaluska for prices starting at $363. Other offerings included a three-night Napa Valley wine trip and a three-day digital photography class in Raquette Lake, N.Y. For more about Road Scholar, call (800) 454-5768 or visit www.roadscholar.org.

Cruises: Talking with a travel agent and searching online can turn up some significant savings. If you are interested in a specialty cruise for seniors only, visit www.cruisecompete.com, a cost-comparison site. Searching under the seniors category will list offerings and lets you compare features and pricing.

Adventure vacations: The travel site www.away.com lists Top 10 Active Baby Boomer Vacations. Affordable options have included biking in Vermont, birding in Alaska and trekking the Appalachian Trail in Maine. Click on the website's maps to get travel options and information relating to North Carolina and the Southeast. On the North Carolina page, you can also post specific questions to fellow travelers such as where scenic RV camping is at the Outer Banks.

Budget tips

Combining air fare, hotel and rental car costs under a package deal can often save quite a bit of money. But it's best to compare the package price with the total cost of booking each element separately to make sure you're getting the best deal.

For individual car rentals, sometimes reserving a car for a week (even if it sits in a driveway or lot) is cheaper than trying to get a daily rate on a than a shorter rental. It pays to try a number of time combinations when you consider your rental period.

Sign up for promotional emails from travel sites that allow you to specify specific cities you want information about such as www.expedia.com and www.travelocity.com. You'll receive alerts on special promotions and fare reductions.

—Family Features.com

Money-saving websites

Websites can save money for anyone at any age. The visitor website www.exploreasheville.com is among websites that offer multiple deals and specific information about how to save money locally. Click on "Cool Asheville Savings" and you can learn about free attractions and scheduled events and also download discount coupons for accommodations and attractions. A recent check included coupons for several hotels and motels, a lodge and a bed and breakfast.

Additional global sites with good information include www.darngooddigs.com, a site where budget-minded travelers share their favorite hotels, inns, and bed and breakfasts around the world. The accommodations are unique and independently owned. Another site, www.eurocheapo.com, posts reviews from EuroCheapo investigators, who show up unannounced at inexpensive hotels all over Europe and check out the rooms. The site also offers budget travel recommendations for transportation.

RAISING YOUNG READERS

Book access and encouragement help develop kids' skills

Exposure to books in the early childhood stages plays a key role in a child's reading development. While most parents and caregivers know that children benefit from reading time, many struggle to fit it into their children's hectic schedules.

Fortunately, there are plenty of fun, practical ways that moms and dads can do to make reading a part of everyday family life.

Create a reading-friendly environment

Research shows that lack of access to books and educational materials is the single greatest barrier to literacy development in the U.S. and beyond. Books, magazines and newspapers should be within easy reach. Try designating a bookcase or shelf where children can keep a personal library.

Non-profit assistance

Schools, daycares, shelters and other organizations that serve children from low-income communities can help those kids build their own home libraries through First Book, a non-profit organization that provides new books to children in need. According to First Book, a steady stream of new, age-appropriate books has been shown to nearly triple interest in reading within months. If your organization is interested in receiving books for children you serve, call (866) 732-3669 or visit www.help.firstbook.org. For other inquiries, call (202) 393-1222 or visit www.firstbook.org.

Animated e-books

Technologies that let you take interactive, animated reading material wherever you go include V.Reader, an e-book system for children. It's aimed at creating an engaging reading experience for early readers, ages three to seven years old. The touch-and-read e-book brings stories to life with narration, characters, animation, graphics, sounds and music. Kids interact as they listen and follow along with a story, or touch the screen and play games to learn words and sentences. To find out more, visit www.vtechkids.com.

Stimulate interest

You can help a child develop reading skills even when you're running errands or doing activities together. By going places and doing things with children, you help build their background knowledge and vocabulary. Telling stories and interacting with each other while on the go helps them develop their listening and thinking skills.

Local reading help

The North Carolina Literacy Association supports independent, community-based literacy councils. These locally based councils offer programs to help adults, teenagers or both gain the reading and writing skills needed to earn a living wage. Sometimes they offer or know about programs to help young children read as well. Services can include free, one-on-one tutoring and other valuable help. In addition, many councils in North Carolina are integrating technology and computer literacy into their instructional programs to enhance students' capacity to achieve their goals. Visit the North Carolina Literacy Association's website at www.ncliteracy.org and click on "Affiliated Programs" for the phone number and website of a council near you.

- When reading a book aloud to young children, point to each word as you read. This helps the child make a visual connection—that the word said is the word seen. Other tips include:
- Read with your child every day, even if it's just for a few minutes.
- Ask open-ended questions, such as "What do you think is going to happen next?" or "Why do you think he did that?"
- Find out what interests your child and get reading materials to feed that interest.
- Let children see you read and invite them to read with you.

Source: FamilyFeatures.com

Steam ovens cook foods quickly while retaining nutrients

While they are priced higher than standard ovens, they cook food much faster and enhance natural flavors.

By James Dulley

Professional bakeries and restaurants use steam ovens because of the quality of cooked foods and the dramatically reduced cooking time. Shorter cooking times result in less energy being used and lower utility bills. Bear in mind the initial price of a steam oven, whether it is built-in or freestanding (similar to a microwave oven), is considerably greater than a standard or convection oven.

Don't run out and buy a professional steam oven. Professional ovens, steam or conventional, may be slightly less expensive but often lack safety features required for home use. So play it safe and get a steam or combination steam/convection oven designed for residential use and approved by Underwriters Laboratories (UL).

Within the past several years, steam oven models have become available for home use. The built-in models look similar to a conventional wall oven. Most models have a small (typically 1.25 quarts) water reservoir, so they do not require a water line connection. You fill the reservoir each time you use the oven.

Using steam, food cooks quickly and retains more natural flavors and nutrients than other cooking methods. Less salt and other seasonings are needed, too. Cooking time is faster because steam has a higher heat content and heat transfer rate than hot air. Water normally boils at 212 degrees and becomes steam. Some steam ovens can produce superheated steam as hot as 500 degrees. When this steam hits the food surface, it transfers its heat to the cold food. As the steam transfers the heat and condenses, the latent heat also goes into the food.

The oven will prompt you to put in potatoes first, since they take the longest to cook. Later, it prompts you to add other vegetables.

Roasting a large chicken in a steam oven takes about 20 minutes, as compared to two hours in a conventional oven. Superheated steam also heats the fat in meat quickly without searing the outside surface. This liquefies fat almost instantly—much of it drips off into a pan, resulting in lower-fat meat. If too much fat dripped off in a conventional oven, the meat would taste dry and tough. In a steam oven, the steam keeps the meat moist and tender.

There are additional energy savings because an entire meal (meat, vegetables and potatoes) can be made in the steam oven without using separate stove pots. Stovetop cooking is particularly inefficient because heat escapes around the sides of pots.

Food menus, settings

Because steam cooking at home is relatively new, most people don't know how to cook with it. Most new steam ovens have a menu of foods from which you select. The oven determines proper cooking time and settings for each food. Some ovens have hundreds of food items stored in memory, and you can also select combinations.

If you are planning to have fish, spinach and potatoes, select those three items. The oven prompts you to place the potatoes in the oven since they take the longest to bake. After 18 minutes, it prompts you to add the fish. After nine more minutes it prompts you to add the spinach for the final three minutes, and then your entire meal is ready.

For more versatility, combination steam/convection ovens can cook even faster. Steam ovens do not brown meats, so the convection portion of the oven can be used to accomplish that. For breads, the moisture inside the steam oven makes much better crusts and provides more even baking.

James Dulley is an engineer and columnist for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Send questions to James Dulley, Carolina Country, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244 or visit www.dulley.com.

Resources

The following companies offer efficient steam wall ovens:

Gaggenau, (877) 442-4436, www.gaggenau.com

Kitchenaid, (800) 334-6889, www.kitchenaid.com

Miele, (800) 843-7231, www.mieleusa.com

Sharp, (800) 237-4277, www.sharpusa.com

Viking, (888) 845-4641, www.vikingrange.com

Priddy's General Store

By Gerald Yokeley

When Lula Priddy and her husband, Noah, went into the general store business in 1929, they didn't give much thought to how long the store would be there. Yet here it is more than 80 years later, and Priddy's General Store still sells the basic and not-so-basic necessities in rural Stokes County, not far from Danbury.

First opened by the Hartman family in 1888, this was like many general stores so important to farm communities. Noah farmed, Lula managed the store, and they raised eight children. It was the Great Depression and neighbors traded whatever they could in order to buy something here. Miss Lula took in eggs, chickens and anything else homegrown and homemade in payment for those basic necessities.

After World War II, the store lived through some prosperous years. One day in 1948, a Shell Oil man stopped by and talked to Lula about switching from Gulf Oil gasoline to Shell. Lula and Noah thought it over and said they'd change to Shell if the salesman would pay for painting the store Shell Oil yellow. Priddy's Store still shows a shade of Shell Oil yellow. One of the paint cans they used hangs on the wall inside.

In the late 1950s, Lula's health began to fail. Her children had helped at the store, but the youngest son, Elwood, said he would take it over and did in 1960. He and his wife, Pat, added some product lines, including a McCulloch chainsaw dealership next door. They raised three daughters and ran the store much as Lula and Noah had. Pat remembers when the Davidson EMC electric co-op (now part of EnergyUnited) told Stokes County members that instead of mailing payments they could pay their power bill at a collection box in the back of Priddy's store, if they wished. The co-op would pay the Priddy family 10 cents per bill for collecting those payments. Pat grinned when remembering how most people did not trust that payment box on the wall.

Tragedy struck in 1999 when a speeding driver ran a red light and took Elwood Priddy's life. Jane, one of the couple's daughters, stepped in to help her mother at the store. Jane herself was raising three small children. After graduating from Appalachian State in 1986, Jane worked 10 years for Estee Lauder cosmetics and was the Danbury mayor for 10 years, but she had always hoped to be involved with preserving the family store. Now past 80, Pat still helps when she can, along with Jane's sister Amy and Amy's husband, Tim.

Jane aims to maintain an authentic country store. She carries local seasonal produce and art, along with homemade dried apple pies, June daisy hoop cheese, purple sweet potato butter and overalls. The wooden floors creak and groan. Near the old woodstove and scales, soda pop bottles and rusted signs adorn the shelves and walls.

And then there's the live bluegrass music in February, May, October and December. "Pickin' at Priddy's" is a Stokes County tradition in itself. Musicians come from all over the Carolina and Virginia mountains. It all looks and feels and smells and sounds just like an old-time reunion.

Gerald Yokeley is a freelance writer/photographer living in Tobaccoville.

Served by EnergyUnited
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2121 Sheppard Mill Rd.
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Carolina country if...

...when your roller skates wore out you used the wheels and two-by-fours to make a scooter.

From Marvin Bass, Huntersville

From Joyce White, Candler

... When the grown-ups left the young'ns alone in the house, they said, "Don't be blowing in the pepper box."

... You were dumb if you didn't "know big wood from brush."

... You learned good marksmanship by shooting rats around the barn with a .22 rifle.

... You earned 10 cents for emptying Grandpa's spit can and putting sand in it.

From Janet Garland, Fayetteville

... Your front yard is a vegetable garden by the road.

... You eat fried fatback as a side dish.

... You used your van's bench seat as a sofa.

... You measured your feet with a stick before buying new shoes.

... Your vehicle that doesn't run stores junk until the next trip to the dump.

From Marcia Schupp, Parkton

... When your dad went rabbit hunting, you told him, "Don't kill the Easter Bunny!"

... When he went deer hunting you told him, "Don't kill Rudolph!"

... Your mother made the kids sit still during a thunderstorm so God could do his work.

... When you asked your dad for a dollar he would say, "A dollar might make you holler. Take this nickel and be tickled."

From Raymond Eugene O'Neill, via Facebook

... There's more grass on the road than there is on your lawn.

From Martha Staton

... You say I want "a nerdin" instead of "another one."

... You hear someone say "ang got nair one" instead of "I don't have one."

... You say "Whatchall doin?" instead of, "What are you doing?"

Share your favorites on facebook at www.carolinacountry.com/facebook

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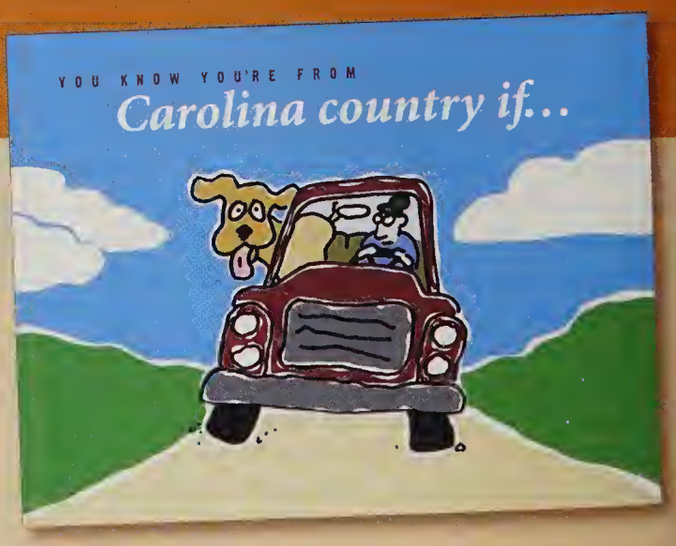
...you got to have this book!



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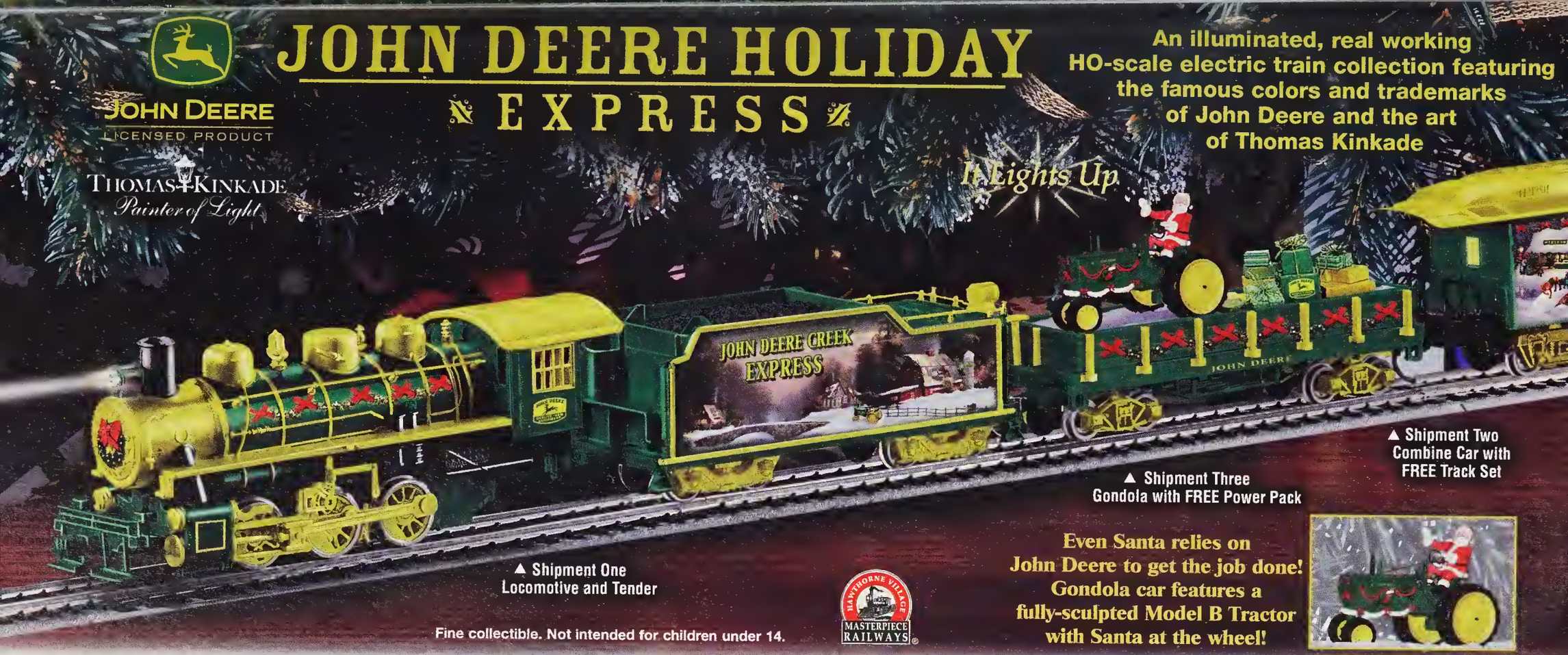

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©2010 Thomas Kinkade ©2010 Hawthorne Village 14-00901-001-BIL

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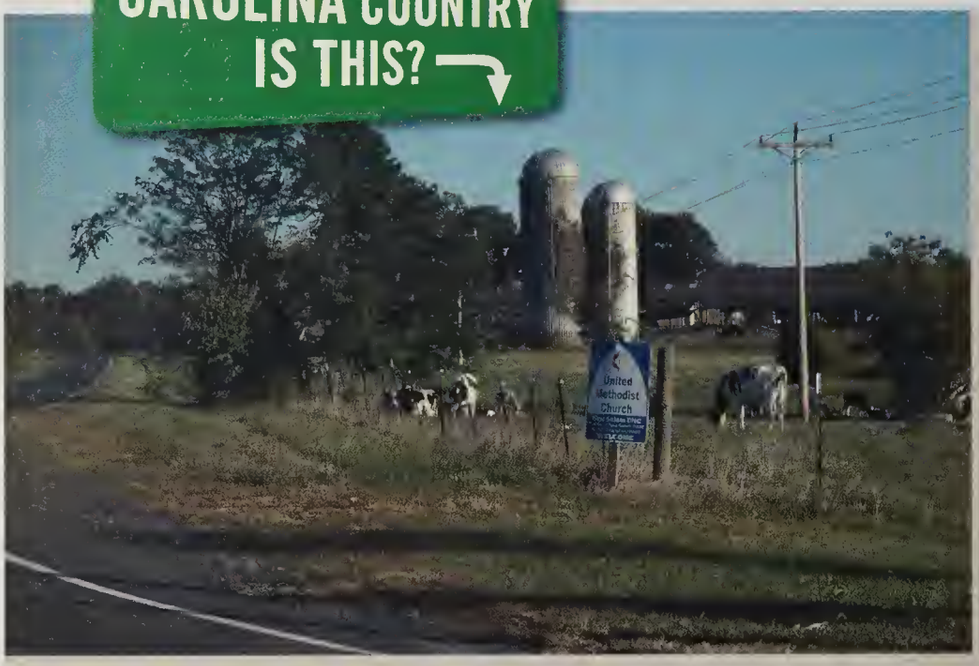

This is a Carolina Country scene in Touchstone Energy territory. If you know where it is, send your answer by Oct. 6 with your name, address, phone number and the name of your electric cooperative.

By e-mail: where@carolinacountry.com

Or by mail: Where in Carolina Country?
P.O. Box 27306
Raleigh, NC 27611

The winner, chosen at random and announced in our November issue, will receive $25.

September winner

The September photo showed the view of Lake Chatuge across Hwy. 64 from the Deerfield Inn north of Hayesville, Clay County. We received more than 250 correct answers. The $25 winner chosen at random from all the correct ones was Beth Allison of Waynesville, a member of Haywood EMC, who sees the scene on her trips to Georgia.

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CAROLINA COUNTRY SCENES photo contest

Send us your favorite photo (North Carolina people or scenes) and the story that goes with it. We will pay $50 for each one that we publish in our Carolina Country Scenes gallery in the February 2011 magazine.

RULES:

Deadline: November 15, 2010.

One entry per household.

Digital photos should be a minimum of 1200 by 1800 pixels or 600kb. Prints a minimum 4 x 6 inches.

Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and e-mail address or phone number.

If you want your print returned, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)

We pay $50 for each submission published. We retain reprint rights.

We will post on our Web site more entries than we publish, but can't pay for those submissions. (Let us know if you don't agree to this.)

SEND TO:

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$75,000	$557.77	15 YR. Fixed	4.00%	4.51%
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$200,000	$1,468.88	15 YR. Fixed	3.87%	4.19%

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I Remember...

Being the youngest wasn't much fun.

Life in Blackberry

I grew up on a big farm in the Blackberry community along with my parents and siblings. Being the youngest wasn't much fun.

We all had to pitch in and help out any way we could. Life was hard but we had loving parents and a good Christian home. I remember when we got our first electricity. I was 10 years old when Mom got her first Maytag wringer washer.

We grew almost all our food on our farm. Dad would take corn to Winebarger Mill in Meat Camp. He would have some ground for feed and cornmeal. We always grew buckwheat for those good ol' pancakes, and we sold a lot of buckwheat flour. In the winter the neighborhood children would come to our house to sleigh ride. But really I think it was for Mom's buckwheat pancakes for lunch.

Edith Story Arnette, Lenoir, Blue Ridge Electric

Looking at this picture, who would ever guess that both would become millionaires one day.

Pulling weeds

As you can see in the picture, my older brother's pants are a little long. That's to make sure he doesn't outgrow them too fast. The hole and the patch on the knees tell me I probably got hand-me-downs. Those are crabapples in our hands. We were so poor back then, we went barefooted a lot.

We grew up on the farm, pulling weeds. Pickup potatoes and cabbage always had to be weeded about two weeks before school started. We usually did pickup potatoes early morning and late afternoon so that the potatoes didn't get sunburn. In the middle of day, we were resting. We would start weeding at 6 a.m. We would get a load of dirt in morning and one in afternoon, all loaded and unloaded by hand shovels. Usually we would stop at 6 p.m., but sometimes later. I remember stopping at 6:15 one time. My daddy wanted to know why we were stopping so early. Well, we had 15 minutes to eat supper and to get to football practice. (We had very tired legs at bedtime.)

After all that work, the two years I spent in the army seem like a vacation to me.

Louis Talmadge Meads, Elizabeth City, Albemarle EMC

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Guidelines:

1. Approximately 200 words.
2. Digital photos must be at least 600kb or 1200 by 800 pixels.
3. No deadline, but only one entry per household per month.
4. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want yours returned.
5. We pay $50 for each one published in the magazine. We retain reprint rights.
6. Include your name, mailing address and the name of your electric cooperative.
7. **E-mail:** iremember@carolinacountry.com **Or by U.S. mail:** I Remember, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616

Mama setting out on her pop calls.

Mama's pop calls

As a third grader in 1946 until I graduated in 1957, I would see on the kitchen table Mama's hand-scribbled note saying, "I'm making pop calls."

She'd made them before I was born. Her pop calls were unannounced visits with relatives or friends along one of two predictable paths out of Snow Hill in eastern North Carolina.

The path to Goldsboro might include pop calls to church friends between the two towns on her way to drop in on her mother or two sisters.

Mama's second path was "through the country" and ultimately to my grandparents' house in Kenansville. Often that route included surprising an elderly cousin, who wasn't a cousin at all but was still included in the family folklore. If Grandma was out playing bridge, Mama might even proceed to Wilmington to visit any number of relatives: Daddy's cousin Helen, Granddaddy's brother and his wife (both pushing 100), or Daddy's sister-in-law with the messiest house in the county (according to Grandma), or Mama's Aunt Pearl, whose silver dresser set I inherited.

Because of her pop calls, Mama knew both sides of the family.

Linda Edwards, Morganton, Rutherford EMC

Patti and me on the first day of school, 1964.

Patti's march through school

In the fall of 1964 I entered third grade and my sister, Patti, was starting first grade at Mt. Pleasant Elementary School. To say that Patti disliked school is an understatement. Ask anyone who rode Bus 29 that year, and they will have a story about Patti and her first year of school. The kids waited fretfully every morning for Patti to take her seat because they knew what was coming. They asked, "How can a six-year-old make herself physically sick every morning as soon as she gets on the bus?"

In the 1960s, the first and second grade classrooms at MPES were about a mile from the third through 12th grades. The older students were dropped off first, and then the younger ones were taken to the elementary school. Patti decided one morning that she would try another strategy to skip school, since getting sick every morning wasn't working. She hid behind some shrubs until everyone went into the building. Then she slipped through the woods, walked a mile up Main Street, crossed Hwy. 49 and went to the hosiery mill where our mom worked. But she didn't avoid the poison ivy in the woods on her walk. Evidence of Patti's adventure that day is obvious in her first grade picture because her face is covered in a rash.

For someone who hated school in first grade, Patti couldn't be stopped once she graduated high school. She attended UNC Charlotte and graduated with a B.S. in nursing, then UNC Greensboro with a master's degree, and later from the University of South Carolina as a family nurse practitioner. So, for all you who have kids that dislike school, Patti is proof that there is hope!

Sharon Sellers, Mount Pleasant, Union Power

You can reach Charles Joyner by e-mail: joyner@carolinacountry.com

Pop Goes The Bubblewrap!

Said Tweedle Dee to Tweedle Dum,
"T.D., to ease the tedium,
we could, perhaps, without mishap,
go dancing on some bubblewrap."

Said Tweedle Dum to Tweedle Dee,
"Your idea sounds like fun to me,
and dancing on some bubblewrap
without mishap should be a snap!"

—*cgj*

digit DETECTION

V	A	N	C	E
X	9	9	9	9
X	8	8	8	X
X	7	7	7	X
X	6	6	6	6
X	5	5	5	5
X	4	4	4	4
3	3	3	3	X
2	2	2	2	X
1	1	1	1	1
X	0	0	0	0

$V+A+N+C+E$
$\_+\_+\_+\_+\_=\_\_\_$

Given these simultaneous equations, can you find the value of VANCE County?

$(VA)^2=NCE$ The square of the 2-digit number VA equals the 3-digit number NCE.

$V+V=A \quad V+A=E$
$C-N=V \quad V+C=A+N$

Use the grid to eliminate impossibilities. i.e., No number higher than 31 has a three digit square. No square ends in 2, 3, 7, or 8.

Phone*etics

Cy Nical says: Door to door salesmen attended a school of

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If you were to punch in the numbers above on your telephone key pad you would spell out the two words answer.

Bits *from* Pieces

Probably all of us have heard about the little boy who came home from Sunday School to tell his parents he had sung the hymn about "Gladly, the cross-eyed bear." I don't doubt that it happened somewhere, sometime.

My son Howard thought he was named for God after learning the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father who are in heaven, Howard be thy name."

In her book, "Little Heathens," Mildred Kalish recalls being comforted that "Surely good Mrs. Murphy will follow me all the days of my life," and pledging allegiance to the flag and to the republic "for Richard Stands, one nation, under God and a dirigible..."

If you can remember a similar misunderstanding in your childhood or have heard one from your children or grandchildren, share it with us.

E-mail: Joyner@carolinacountry.com
US Mail: Carolina Country, P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27616

Can you fill these OPEN SPACES?

Each digit in these two multiplication problems has been replaced with a letter from OPEN SPACES. The letter O=4 and the letter N=2. Can you fill in the open spaces above the other letters to find the value of OPEN SPACES?

$$\begin{array}{cccc} & 2 & 2 & \\ \hline E & N & N & C \\ & & \times & \frac{4}{O} \\ \hline 4 & & & 2 \\ \hline O & P & E & N \end{array} \qquad \begin{array}{cccccc} & & 4 & & & \\ \hline A & O & S & P & U & C \\ & & & & \times & \frac{2}{N} \\ \hline & & & & & \\ \hline S & P & A & C & E & S \end{array}$$

For answers, please see page 35

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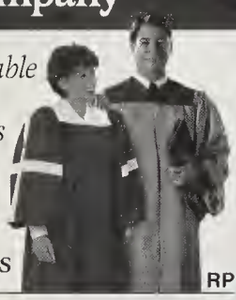

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Getting To Know...

Kellie Pickler

Kellie Pickler.com

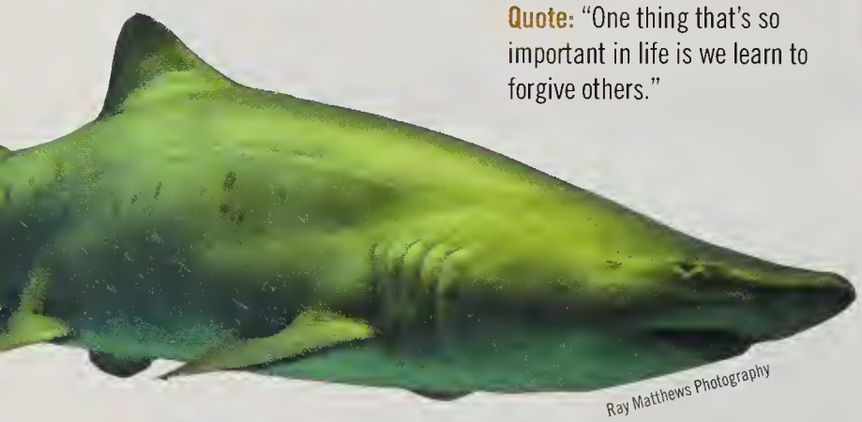
Born: June 28, 1986, in Albemarle
Known for: Country music artist
Accomplishments: Kellie Pickler grew up in Albemarle and was abandoned by her mother at age 2. Her father was in and out of jail. Although her mother later briefly regained custody of Kellie, the singer-songwriter was mostly raised by her grandparents. She was a cheerleader and sang at her graduation from North Stanly High School in New London (near Albemarle). She came into the spotlight as a contestant on the fifth season of "American Idol." At age 20, she signed to 19 Recordings/BNA Records and released her debut album, "Small Town Girl." The CD produced several hot singles, including her soulful song "I Wonder." Her next self-titled CD produced more hits including "Best Days of Your Life," which she co-wrote with Taylor Swift. Kellie has been called ditzy, but she has pointed out that her challenge has been to quickly learn about being in the music business while in the public eye. She's participated in many charitable events, including an "N.C. Children's PROMISE" fundraiser, as well as performed on USO tours. Kellie also supports St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, where she gives kids special visits.
Quote: "One thing that's so important in life is we learn to forgive others."

Historic N.C. maps now online

"A New Map of Carolina," published in London around 1685. From the Outer Banks History Center.

More than 3,200 historic maps of North Carolina are now available online as part of the digital North Carolina Maps project. The newly completed online library, accessed on www.lib.unc.edu/dc/ncmaps contains maps from 1584 through the 20th century, including detailed maps for each of North Carolina's 100 counties. Highlights include a 1584 map of the Southeast and coast and geodetic survey maps from the 19th and 20th centuries, showing detailed surveys of the ever-changing North Carolina coast. North Carolina Maps also contains an interactive option allowing users to lay selected historic maps over current street maps and satellite images. Another feature combines its historic maps with a current Google Earth 3-D "flying tour," accessible at www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZ82Hk_Ryeg.

The first state-sponsored map of North Carolina, published in 1808. From the North Carolina Collection, UNC-Chapel Hill.



Ray Matthews Photography

Masquerade among marine life

Thrills and gills await those who visit any of the state's three North Carolina Aquariums during Trick or Trick Under The Sea (TOTUS) evenings. North Carolina Aquariums at Fort Fisher near Wilmington, at Pine Knoll Shores near Atlantic Beach and on Roanoke Island in Manteo all offer special Halloween-themed games and activities on Wednesday, Oct. 27 and Thursday, Oct. 28. By the way, the North Carolina Aquarium at Roanoke Island has a new shark exhibit. Visitors can play new interactive games, touch a live Bamboo shark, and watch many new sharks in the Aquarium's big tank. For more about each North Carolina Aquarium, call the main office in Raleigh at (800) 832-3474, do an online search by site name, or visit www.ncaquariums.com.

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Sweet bugs to munch

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Ingredients
Large gumdrops
Small, knot-shaped or twist-shaped pretzels
Licorice whips, cut into small pieces
Toothpick (to make holes)

Break the pretzels into shapes that resemble wings of bugs, then poke two "wings" into each gumdrop. On the top of each gumdrop, make two holes and insert a licorice whip piece in each hole to make the bug's "antennae." Mmmmm, edible bugs!

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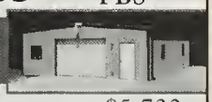

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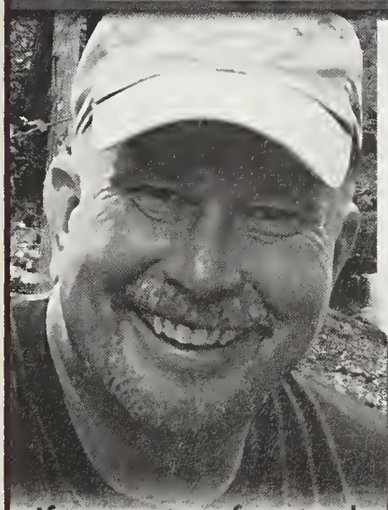

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(910) 483-5311

Carolina Bridal Show
Greenville
(252) 329-4200

4 | MON.

Agricultural Fair
Oct. 4–9, Greenville
(252) 329-4200

8 | FRI.

Art After Hours
Wake Forest
(919) 570-0765
www.sunflowerstudiowf.com

Gallery Crawl
West Jefferson
(336) 846-2787
www.ashecountyarts.org

Bluegrass Meets Mariachi!
Charlotte
704-563-7080
www.folksociety.org

Ava Gardner Festival
Oct. 8–9, Smithfield
(919) 934-5830
www.avagardner.org

Outer Banks Lighthouse Keepers' Dinner
Oct. 8–10, Ocracoke Island
(919) 787-6378
www.oblhs.org

9 | SAT.

Scuppernong River Festival
Columbia
(252) 796-2781

Lobster Fair & Arts Festival
Greenville
(252) 329-4200
www.st-tim.org

Out'n the Cold
Bluegrass, Americana music
Sanford
(919) 774-4512
www.outnthecold.com

Contra Dance
Greenville
(252) 329-4200
www.edu.edu/org/ecufolk/fasg

MSTHA Tractor Parade & Show
Asheboro
(336) 318-6955
www.midstatetractorheritage.org

Tradition Turners Pottery Festival
Vale
(704) 462-1695
www.traditionturnerspotteryfestival.com

Goldwing Express Concert
Troy
(704) 985-6987
www.bluegrassintroy.com

Kudzu Crafts
Weekend Workshops for Women series
Rutherfordton
(828) 288-5009
www.rcvag.com

Folklife Festival & Craft Show
Oct. 9–10, Huntersville
(704)875-2312
www.lattaplantation.org

Leaves Craft Show
Oct. 9–10, Maggie Valley
(828) 497-9425
www.maggievalleycraftshows.com

MUMFEST
Oct. 9–10, New Bern
(252) 349-4741
www.mumfest.com

Harvest Festival
Wine, music, refreshments
Oct. 9–10, Swan Creek
(336) 835-9463
www.swancreekvineyards.com

Carolina Bonsai Expo
Oct. 9–10, Asheville
(828) 665-2492
www.ncarboretum.org

John Blue Cotton Festival
Oct. 9–10, Laurinburg
(910) 276-2495
www.johnbluecottonfestival.com

Craft Show
Oct. 9–10 & 16–17, Waynesville
(828) 627-8529
www.braca.org

Party in the Park
Car & tractor shows, food
Richfield
(704) 463-1308

10 | SUN.

Simon Says Guided Bird Walk
Focuses on southbound migration
Chimney Rock Park
(828) 245-1492
www.chimneyrockpark.com

12 | TUES.

"Mark Twain 100 Years Later"
Performed by Dave Ehlert
Kings Mountain
(704) 739-2371

Corn Husk Dolls
Doll-making class at museum
Oct. 12 & 21, Winston Salem
(336) 721-7350
www.oldsalem.org

14 | THURS.

NC Symphony's Art in Music
New Bern
(877) 627-6724
www.ncsymphony.org

Historic Hauntings: A Ghastly Ghost Tour
Oct. 14–16, Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311
www.faydogwoodfestival.com

"The Diviners"
Theatrical drama
Oct. 14–16, Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311
www.uncfsu.edu/theatre/comingattractions.htm

Lake Eden Arts Festival
Oct. 14–17, Black Mountain
(828) 686-8742
www.theleaf.org

15 | FRI.

Danny Schmidt Concert
Lyrical, storytelling songs
New Bern
(252) 354-2444
www.downeastfolkarts.org

CSI: Live! A Mad Science Production
Interactive sleuthing program for kids
Greenville
(252) 328-4788
www.ecu.edu/familyfare

Freeboot Friday
Live music, food, arts & crafts for kids
Greenville
(252) 329-4200
www.uptowngreenville.com

East Coast Drag Times Hall of Fame & Reunion
Henderson
(252) 438-2222
www.kerrlake-nc.com

James Gregory
Comedic performance
Mount Airy
(336) 786-7998
www.surryarts.org

Salsa Dance
Greenville
(252) 752-7350
www.ecu.edu/org/ecufolk/fasg

Chili Festival & Big Boy Toy Show
Oct. 15–16, Havelock
(252) 447-1101
www.havelockchamber.org

Ghost Tales in the Dark
Oct. 15–16 & 22–23, Huntersville
(704) 875-2312
www.lattaplantation.org

"A Harvest of Quilts"
Fall Quilt Show
Oct. 15–17, Flat Rock
(828) 891-6414
www.westernncquilters.org

"101 Dalmatians"
Musical for kids
Oct. 15–31, Hickory
(828) 327-3855
www.hct.org

16 | SAT.

Country Fair
Valle
(828) 963-4609

Voice of the Blue Ridge with Zephyr Lightning Bolts
Mount Airy
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www.surryarts.org

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Ventriloquist & comedienne
West Jefferson
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www.ashecountyarts.org

Snuffy Jenkins Festival
Old-time music, food, crafts
Spindale
(828) 245-1492
www.snuffyjenkinsfestival.com

Old School Sorghum Festival
General store tour, live music
Garland
(910) 564-5069
www.oldschoolsorghum.com

Color Me Curious
Learn about changing fall colors
Chimney Rock
(828) 245-1492
www.chimneyrockpark.com

Danny Schmidt Concert
Lyrical, storytelling songs
Morehead City
(252) 354-2444
www.downeastfolkarts.org

Autumn Arts & Crafts Festival
Oct. 16–17, Lake Lure
(828) 245-1492
www.lakelureartsandcraftsfestivals.com

Wrapped Silver Bracelet
Weekend Workshops for Women series
Rutherfordton
(828) 288-5009
www.rcvag.com

17 | SUN.

African American Historic Walking Tour
New Bern
(252) 514-4935
www.tryonpalace.org

Culinary Showcase
Chefs, caterers prepare food samples
Southern Pines
(910) 692-3926
www.moorecountychamber.com

21 | THURS.

Jon Reep Performs
Part of a comedy series
Spindale
(828) 245-1492
www.foundationshows.org

22 | FRI.

Lobsterfest
New Bern
(252) 633-0100
www.stpaulcatholicschoolnc.org

ECU Homecoming/Freeboot Friday
Live music, food, arts & crafts for kids
Greenville
(252) 329-4200
www.uptowngreenville.com

Encore Step Show
Dance performance
Greenville
(252) 329-4200

Woodworks
Juried woodworking show awards reception
Rutherfordton
(828) 245-1492
www.rcvag.com

NC History Center grand opening
Oct. 22–23, New Bern
(800) 767-1560
www.tryonpalace.org

BalloonFest
Oct. 22–24, Statesville
(704) 872-7761
www.carolinaballoonfest.com

Ghastly Ghost Tour
Oct. 22–24, Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311
www.faydogwoodfestival.com

23 | SAT.

Fall Harvest Barn Dance
Blowing Rock
(828) 295-3782

Fall Fest
Dobson
(336) 366-3111

Farm Swap Meet
Lillington
(910) 987-2143

Tony Bose Case Tour
Knife-maker event with band, vintage tractors, food, prizes
Troy
(910) 975-3158

Fall Open House
Lexington
(336) 249-4428
www.bobtimberlake.com

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Harkers Island
(252) 241-3881
www.coresound.com

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Nature photography workshop
Oct. 23–24, Chimney Rock
(828) 245-1492
www.mountainlens.com

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25 | MON.

An Evening with Lily Tomlin
Comedic performance
Greenville
(252) 329-4200
www.ecu.edu

27 | WED.

March of Dimes Chef's Auction
Greenville
(252) 329-4200

"Otherwise Known As Sheila The Great"
Musical for kids
Spindale
(828) 245-1492
www.foundationshows.org

28 | THURS.

Halloween Tours
Oct. 28–30, Winston Salem
(336) 721-7350
www.oldsalem.org

Ghostwalk
Oct. 28–30, New Bern
(252) 638-8558
www.newbernhistorical.org

29 | FRI

Juried Craft Show & Sale
Oct. 29–30, Brevard
(828) 884-6448

Quilts for 300 Years
Oct. 29–30, New Bern
(252) 637-3788
www.twinriversquilters.com

Civil War Ghost Walk
Oct. 29–30, Huntersville
(704) 875-2312
www.lattaplantation.org

NC Senior Games
Oct. 29–31, Greenville
(252) 329-4200
www.ncseniorgames.org

"Smell of the Kill"
Comedy
Oct. 29–31, Hayesville
(828) 389-8632
www.licklogplayers.org

30 | SAT.

Halloween Festival
Blowing Rock
(828) 295-5222

Greg Giannascoli Concert
Marimba and percussion artist
Mooresville
(704) 872-8736
www.iredellconcerts.com

Make A Difference
Author Max Lucado, Christian music
Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311
www.atthecrown.com

Batology
Keepers at zoo discuss bats
Oct. 30–31, Asheboro
(336) 879-7410
www.nczoo.org

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For January: Nov. 24

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By Arnie Katz

More advice on replacing your water heater

To save on water heating costs, would you install a smaller tank than the one you have now?

Last time we talked about what to do when you think your water heater is close to death. As with other deaths, planning ahead can reap benefits. Here are some other things to think about as you're doing your research:

How much hot water do you need?

Most of the guidelines for sizing water heaters are based on outdated assumptions that the current economy has many people questioning. Many of us have water-saving shower heads and use laundry detergents and washing machines that don't require hot water. Is it really essential to guarantee we always have as much hot water as we want, or could we live a perfectly happy life even if we had to wait 20 minutes for a shower a few times a year when the relatives come for a weekend? If we could save a few bucks a month by having a smaller tank, would we choose to do that? There's no right answer. Some of us feel it is absolutely essential to never run out of hot water. Others would rather put up with some minor inconvenience and use that money to go out to dinner, donate to Haiti relief efforts or buy a book. Most of us never have the opportunity to make that choice because it's made for us or made under pressure. A little thought and planning can give us a little more control.

Tanks vs. tankless

Tankless water heaters are not new, but they are promoted with religious zeal. They are probably much more common, worldwide, than the storage tank models most of us grew up with.

When I lived in England in the 1960s, most apartments came with tankless water heaters. When you wanted hot water, you fed coins into a slot. In much of the Third World, if you stay in a hotel or guest house in the moderate price range, hot water is created by an electric heater mounted on the shower head, bare wires and all. Sometimes, this can be a shocking experience.

Modern tankless water heaters available in the U.S. are much more sophisticated, efficient and safe, but they are not a cure-all. Electric ones are rarely worth considering, and whether gas ones will save you money depends a lot on who lives in the house. Some people, particularly teenagers, will take endless showers if there is endless hot water, increasing your bills.

Modern tanks are much better insulated than older models, so the "standby losses"—the energy lost by the tank when you're not using hot water—are not as great as they used to be; so the tankless models don't have as big an advantage. And there have been a lot of reports of maintenance problems, particularly for people with well water.

Solar water heating can pay for itself with energy savings over six to eight years. You should have an experienced, reliable installer, who will be in business long enough to service the system when it needs it.

How about a solar water heater?

These are much more expensive in the short run, $6,000-7,000 or more, but there are state and federal tax credits available in North Carolina that can reduce the cost by 65 percent. That means if you pay $7,000 for the system, you'll get back $4,550 at tax time, so it's costing you $2,450. Typically, you can expect to save about $300–400 per year, so the system will pay for itself in six to eight years, and should last for at least 15. The key is to get an experienced, reliable installer, who will be in business long enough to service the system when it needs it. Saving a few hundred dollars on bargain equipment or a low-bid contractor is probably not wise.

Any new products I should know about?

There's a relatively new product called the heat pump water heater. While they've been around for 10 or 15 years or more, very few have been installed in North Carolina. My limited experience with them has been very positive: they seem to work well, saving almost as much as solar heaters, but for a much lower cost, typically $1,200–42,000 installed. How well they'll hold up, and how easy they will be to service are questions at this point, but this option is definitely worth considering, particularly if you have a good local contractor nearby who installs them. [For more information, see page 7.]

Finally, if you do find yourself in that crisis situation, you can still get a water heater that's more efficient than the standard models. If you get an electric model, make sure the Energy Factor (EF) is at least .93. These won't save you nearly as much as the high-efficiency types above, but will perform a lot better than the standard bargain models.

Arnie Katz is director of training and senior building science consultant at Advanced Energy in Raleigh (www.advancedenergy.org). Send your home energy questions to editor@carolinacountry.com

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Frosted Pumpkin Cookies

- 1 cup shortening
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 1 can (15 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin
- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup chopped dates

Caramel Frosting

- ½ cup butter, cubed
- 1½ cups packed brown sugar
- ¼ cup milk
- 1 teaspoon maple flavoring
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 to 2½ cups confectioners' sugar

In a large bowl, cream shortening and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in pumpkin. Combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon and salt; gradually add to pumpkin mixture and mix well. Stir in pecans and dates. (May omit dates and substitute chocolate chips if desired.)

Drop by teaspoonfuls 2 inches apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375 degrees for 13–15 minutes or until firm.

Meanwhile, for frosting, combine the butter, brown sugar and milk in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly; boil for 3 minutes. Remove from the heat; stir in maple flavoring and vanilla.

Cool slightly; beat in enough confectioners' sugar to achieve spreading consistency. Remove cookies to wire racks; frost while warm.

Yield: 6½ dozen

Monster Caramel Apples

- 8 to 10 medium apples
- 8 to 10 wooden sticks
- 32 cream-filled chocolate sandwich cookies, coarsely chopped
- 1 cup butter, cubed
- 2 cups packed brown sugar
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 8 squares (1 ounce each) white candy coating, coarsely chopped
- ½ cup orange and brown sprinkles

Wash and thoroughly dry apples; insert a wooden stick into each. Place on a waxed paper lined baking sheet; chill. Place cookie crumbs in a shallow dish; set aside.

In a heavy 3-quart saucepan, combine butter, brown sugar, milk and corn syrup; bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook and stir until mixture reaches 248 degrees (firm-ball stage) on a candy thermometer, about 30–40 minutes. Remove from the heat; stir in vanilla.

Dip each apple into hot caramel mixture to completely coat, then dip the bottom in cookie crumbs, pressing lightly to adhere. Return to baking sheet to cool.

In a microwave, melt candy coating; stir until smooth. Transfer to a small bag; cut a small hole in a corner of bag; drizzle coating over apples. Decorate with sprinkles.

Yield: 8–10 servings

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Recipes are by Taste of Home magazine. For a sample copy, send $2 to Taste of Home, Suite 4321, PO Box 990, Greendale, WI 53129-0990. Visit the Web site at www.tasteofhome.com.

Home Style Stew

- 2 packages (16 ounces each) frozen vegetables for stew
- 1½ pounds beef stew meat, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 can (10¾ ounces) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
- 1 can (10¾ ounces) condensed tomato soup, undiluted
- 1 envelope reduced-sodium onion soup mix

Place vegetables in a 5-quart slow cooker. In a large nonstick skillet coated with cooking spray, brown beef on all sides.

Transfer to slow cooker. Combine remaining ingredients; pour over top. Cover and cook on low for 6-7 hours or until beef is tender.

From Your Kitchen

Apple Cake

- 1¼ cups oil
- 2 cups sugar
- 3 eggs
- 3 cups plain flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 3 cups diced apples (2 large)
- 1½ cup chopped pecans
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Mix ingredients in the order listed. Batter will be very stiff until the apples are added. Pour into a greased and floured 9-by-13-inch pan. Bake one hour or until toothpick inserted comes out clean. While cake is warm, pour the sauce over the top.

Sauce

- 1½ cups brown sugar
- 1 stick butter or margarine
- ¼ cup milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla flavoring

Cook brown sugar, butter and milk on medium heat until boiling. Cook two minutes, stirring constantly. Take from burner and add vanilla. Pour over warm cake.

Judy Johnson of Lexington, a member of EnergyUnited, will receive $25 for submitting this recipe.

Send Us Your Recipes

Contributors whose recipes are published will receive $25. We retain reprint rights for all submissions. Recipes submitted are not necessarily entirely original. Include your name, address, phone number (for questions), and the name of your electric cooperative. Mail to: Carolina Country Kitchen, P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611 or E-mail to: Jenny.Lloyd@carolinacountry.com

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